74.

# A NEW REHEARSAL; OR *BAYS* the Younger.

Containing an Examen of

*The Ambitious Step-mother.*
*Tamerlane,*
*The Biter,*
*Fair Penitent,*
*Royal Convert,*
*Ulysses,* And
*Jane Shore.*

All Written by *N. ROWE* Esq;

ALSO

A Word or Two upon Mr. POPE's *Rape of the Lock.*

To which is prefix'd,

A PREFACE in Vindication of CRITICISM in General, by the late Earl of *SHAFTSBURY.*

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*Why is he Honour'd with a Poet's Name,*
*Who neither knows, nor wou'd observe a Rule?*
ROSCOMMON.

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# THE PREFACE.

*I Know that it is the common Cry of the* Poetasters *of the Town and their Fautors, either through Ignorance, or in Complaisance to a present Vogue, That it is an envious, ill-natur'd thing to endeavour to expose the Pretenders to Wit and Poetry, who have, by Art, or better Luck than Men more meritorious, gain'd a transitory Applause with the Town. The Judges and Magistrates may, with full as strong Reason, be reproach'd with ill Nature in putting the Laws in Execution against a successful Thief, Cheat or Impostor; whereas there is nothing more just to Humane Society, nor more conducive to the fixing the Vigour and Health of the Public, than a rigorous Execution of the Laws; a Neglect of which is a certain Proof of a Luxurious Age, and of a People hastening to their utter Dissolution.*

*The ſame will hold in the Republic of Letters, if the Critics or Judges let every ignorant Pretender to Scribling paſs on the World for a Man of Genius, and Art, there would be an end of all Excellence, and Art wou'd be no more heard of in the Kingdom of the Muſes, whilſt Ignorance and Impudence aſſume the Seats of Learning, and Modeſt Merit.*

*But to give the Reader a better Idea of Criticiſm, I ſhall tranſcribe ſome Part of what that great Genius, the late Earl of* Shaftsbury, *has ſaid in Defence of it.*

A Legitimate and Juſt Taſte can neither be gotten, made, conceiv'd, or produc'd, without the Antecedent *Labour* and *Pains* of *CRITICISM.*

For this Reaſon we preſume not only to Defend the Cauſe of *Criticks*; but to declare open War againſt thoſe indolent ſupine *Authors*, *Readers*, *Auditors*, *Actors* or *Spectators*, who making their HUMOUR alone the Rule of what is *Beautiful* and *Agreeable*, and having no Account to give of ſuch their HUMOUR or *odd* FANCY, reject the *Criticiſing* or *examining Art*, by which alone they are able to diſcover the *true* BEAUTY and WORTH of every Object.

*In another Place this incomparable Author ſays theſe Words:* The WRITERS or AUTHORS in *Poſſeſſion*, have an eaſier Time

Time than any *Miniſtry* or *Religious Party*, that is uppermoſt. They have found a Way by decrying *all* CRITICISM *in general*, to get rid of their *Diſſenters*, and prevent all Pretences to farther *Reformation* in their State. The *Critic* is made appear diſtinct, and of another *Species*, wholly different from the *Writer*. None who have a GENIUS for *Writing*, and can perform with any Succeſs, are preſum'd ſo ill-natur'd and illiterate, as to endeavour to ſignalize themſelves in CRITICISM.

'Tis not difficult however to imagine why this practical Difference between *Writer* and *Critic* has been ſo generally eſtabliſh'd amongſt us, as to make the Provinces ſeem wholly diſtinct and irreconcileable. The *forward* WITS, who, without waiting their due Time, or performing their requiſite Studies, ſtart up into the World as Authors, having with little Pains, or Judgment, and by the ſtrength of Fancy meerly, acquir'd a *Name* with Mankind, can, on no Account afterwards ſubmit to a Decrial, or Diſparagement of thoſe *raw Works*, to which they ow'd their early Character and Diſtinction. Ill wou'd it fare with them indeed, if on theſe precarious Terms, they ſhou'd venture upon Criticiſm; or offer to move that Spirit, which wou'd infallibly give ſuch Diſturbance to their eſtabliſh'd Title.

Now we may conſider, that in our Nation, and eſpecially in our preſent Age, while Wars, Debates, and publick Converſations turn our Minds ſo wholly upon Buſineſs, and Affairs; the better Genius's being in a Manner neceſſarily involv'd in the Active Sphere, on which the general Eye of Mankind is ſo ſtrongly fixt, there muſt remain in the Theatre of Wit a ſufficient Vacancy of Place; and the Quality of *Actor* upon that Stage muſt of Conſequence be very eaſily attainable, at a low price of Ingenuity, or Underſtanding.

The Perſons, therefore, who are in Poſſeſſion of the *Prime* Parts in this deſerted Theatre, being ſuffer'd to maintain their Ranks and Stations in full Eaſe, have naturally a good Agreement and Underſtanding with their Fellow-Wits: Being indebted to the *Times* for this Happineſs, that with ſo little Induſtry, and Capacity, they have been able to ſerve the Nation with Wit, and ſupply the Places of real Diſpenſers and Miniſters of the MUSES *Treaſures*; they muſt neceſſarily, as they have any Love for themſelves, or fatherly affection for their Works, conſpire with one another to preſerve their common Intereſt of Indolence, and juſtify their Remiſsneſs, Uncorrectneſs, Inſipidneſs, and down-

downright Ignorance of all literate Art, or juſt Poetic Beauty.

*Magna inter Molles Concordia.*

For this Reaſon you ſee them mutually Courteous and Benevolent; Gracious and Obliging beyond Meaſure; Complementing one another interchangeably at the Head of their Works in *Recommendatory* Verſes, or in ſeparate Panegyricks, Eſſays, and Fragments of Poetry; ſuch as in the *Miſcellaneous Collections* (your yearly Retale of Wit) we ſee curiouſly compacted and accommodated to the Reliſh of the World. Here the *Tyrocinium* of Genius's is annually diſplay'd. Here if you think fit, you may make Acquaintance with the young offſpring of WITS, as they come up gradually under *the Old*, with due Courtſhip and Homage paid to thoſe high Predeceſſours of Fame, in hopes of being one day admitted, by Turn, into the noble Order, and made WITS by *Patent*, and *Authority*.

This is the young *Fry*, which you may ſee buſily ſurrounding the grave Poet, or chief PLAYHOUSE AUTHOR, at a *Coffee-houſe*. They are his Guards, ready to take up Arms for him, if by ſome preſumptuous Critic he is at any Time attack'd. They are indeed the very ſhadows

of their immediate Predeceſſour, and repreſent the ſame Features, with ſome ſmall Alteration, perhaps for the Worſe. They are ſure to aim at nothing above or beyond their Maſter; and wou'd on no Account, give him the leaſt Jealouſie of their aſpiring to any Degree or Order of acting above him. From hence that *Harmony*, and *reciprocal Eſteem*, which, on ſuch a Bottom as this, cannot fail of being perfectly well eſtabliſh'd among our Poets; The Age mean while, being after this Manner hopefully provided, and ſecure of a Conſtant and *like* Succeſſion of meritorious Wits in every kind.

If by chance a Man of Senſe, unappriz'd of the Authority of theſe high Powers, ſhou'd venture to accoſt the Gentlemen of this Fraternity, at ſome *Coffee-houſe Committee*, or while they were taken up in mutual Admiration and uſual Praiſe of their National and Cotemporary Wits, 'Tis poſſible, he might be treated with ſome Civility, whilſt he enquir'd, for ſatisfaction ſake, into the Beauties of thoſe particular Works ſo unanimouſly extoll'd. But ſhou'd he preſume to ſpeak in general —— "*Why is our* EPIC, *or* DRAMATIC, "*our* ESSAYS, *or* COMMON PROSE, "*no better executed? Or why, in particular,* "*does ſuch or ſuch a reputed Wit Write ſo in-*

"*correctly,*

" correctly, and with ſo little Regard to Juſt-
" neſs of Thought or Language? The Anſwer
" wou'd preſently be given, that we Engliſh-
" men are not tied up to ſuch rigid Rules, as
" thoſe of the Ancient Grecian, or Modern
" French Criticks.

" Be it ſo (Gentlemen) 'tis your good Plea-
" ſure, nor ought any one to diſpute it with you.
" You are Maſters no doubt, in your own Coun-
" try. But (Gentlemen) the Queſtion here
" is not what your Authority may be over your
" own Writers. You may have them of what
" Faſhion or Size of Wit you pleaſe; and allow
" them to entertain you at the Rate, you think
" ſufficient, and ſatisfactory: But can you,
" by your good Pleaſure, or the Approbation of
" your higheſt Patrons, make that to be either
" Wit or Senſe, which wou'd otherwiſe have
" been Bombaſt, and Contradiction? If your
" Poets are ſtill Mr. BAYS's, and your
" Proſe Authors Sir ROGERS, without
" offering a better Manner, Muſt it follow,
" that the Manner it ſelf is good, or the Wit
" Genuine? ——— What ſay you (Gentlemen)
" to this new Piece? ——— Let us examin
" theſe Lines, which you call ſhining! This
" ſtring of Sentences, which you call Clever!
" This Pile of Metaphors, which you call Su-
" blime! ——— Are you willing (Gentlemen)
" to ſtand the Teſt? Do you deſpiſe the Exa-
" mination?

" *Sir, ſince you are pleas'd to take the Li-*
" *berty with us, may we preſume to ask you a*
" *Queſtion?* ——— *Oh! Gentlemen,* — *as many*
" *as you pleaſe; I ſhall be highly Honour'd.* —
" *Why then pray Sir inform us whether you*
" *have ever Writ?* — *Very often, Gentlemen,*
" *eſpecially on a Poſt Night.* — *But have you*
" *Writ (for Inſtance Sir) a* Play, *a* Song,
" *an* Eſſay, *or a* PAPER, *as by way of Emi-*
" *nence the current* Pieces *of our Weekly Wits*
" *are generally ſtil'd?* — *Something of this kind*
" *I may perhaps (Gentlemen) have attempted,*
" *tho' without publiſhing my Work. But pray*
" *(Gentlemen) what is my* Writing *or not* Wri-
" ting *to the Queſtion in Hand?* — *Only this*
" *(Sir) and you may fairly take our Words for*
" *it, that when ever you Publiſh, you will find the*
" *Town againſt you; your Piece will infallibly*
" *be condemn'd.* — *So let it. But for what*
" *Reaſon, (Gentlemen) for I am ſure you*
" *never ſaw the Piece.* ——— *No, Sir, but*
" *you are a* Critic; *and we know by certain*
" *Experience, that when a* Critic *according to*
" *Rule and Method writes, he is ſure never to*
" *hit the* Engliſh *Taſte. Did not Mr.* R——
" *who Criticiz'd upon our* Engliſh *Tragedy,*
" *Write a ſorry one of his own?* ——— *If he*
" *did (Gentlemen) 'twas his own fault not to*
" *know his Genius better. But is his* Criticiſm
" *the leſs juſt on this Account? If a Muſician*
" *performs his Part well in the hardeſt Sympho-*
" *nies,*

" *nies, he muſt neceſſarily know the Notes,*
" *and underſtand the Rules of Harmony, and*
" *Muſic. But muſt a Man, therefore who has*
" *an Ear, and who has Studied the Rules of*
" *Muſic, of neceſſity have a Voice or Hand?*
" *Can no one poſſibly judge of a* Fiddle, *but*
" *who is himſelf a* Fidler? *Can no one judge*
" *of a* Picture, *but who is himſelf a* Layer
" on of Colours.———

Thus far our rational Gentleman perhaps might venture before our Coffee-houſe Audience. Had I been at his Elbow, to prompt him as a Friend, I ſhou'd hardly have thought fit to remind him of anything further: On the contrary, I ſhou'd have rather taken him aſide, to inform him of this *Cabal*, and eſtabliſh'd *Corporation* of Wit; of their declar'd Averſion to *Criticiſm*, and their known Laws, and Statutes in that Caſe made and provided. I ſhou'd have told him in ſhort, that Learned Arguments wou'd be miſpent on ſuch as theſe; and that he wou'd find little ſucceſs, tho' he ſhou'd ever ſo plainly demonſtrate to the Gentlemen of this ſize of Wit and Underſtanding.

*That the greateſt Maſters of Art in every Kind of Writing, were eminent in the* Critical *Practice.* But that they really were ſo, witneſs among the *Antients* the greateſt PHYLOSOPHERS, whoſe *Critical*

Pieces

Pieces are intermixt with their profound *Philoſophical* Works, and other politer Tracts ornamentally writ for public Uſe. Witneſs in *Hiſtory* and *Rhetoric*, *ISOCRATES*, *DIONYSIUS*, *HALICARNASSEUS*, *PLUTARCH*, and the corrupt *LUCIAN*, himſelf; the only one perhaps of theſe Authors, whom our Gentlemen may, in ſome Modern Tranſlations have look'd into with any Curioſity, or Delight. To theſe, among the *Romans*, we may add *CICERO*, *VARRO*, *HORACE*, *QUINTILIAN*, *PLINY*, and many more.

Among the *Moderns* a *BOILEAU* and a *CORNEILLE* are ſufficient Precedents in the Caſe before us. They apply'd their *Criticiſm* with juſt ſeverity ev'n to their own Works. This indeed is a manner hardly practicable with the Poets of our own Nation. It wou'd be unreaſonable to expect of them, that they ſhou'd bring ſuch Meaſures in Uſe, as being apply'd to their Works, wou'd diſcover them to be wholly deform'd, and diſproportionable. 'Tis no wonder therefore, if we have ſo little of this *Critical* Genius extant to guide us in our Taſte. 'Tis no Wonder if what is generally current in this Kind, lies in a manner buried, and in diſguize under Burleſque, as particularly in that

that witty Comedy [*THE REHEARSAL*] of a noble Author of this laſt Age. To the ſhame however of our profeſs'd *Wits* and *Enterprizers* in the higher Sphere of *Poetry*, it may be obſerv'd, that they have not wanted good Advice, and Inſtruction of the graver Kind, from as high a Hand in Reſpect of Quality and Character, ſince one of the juſteſt of our Modern Poems, and ſo confeſs'd, even by our Poets themſelves, is a ſhort *Criticiſm* or *ART OF POETRY*, by which, if they themſelves are to be judg'd, they muſt in general appear no better, than mere Bunglers, and void of all true Senſe and Knowledge in their Art. But if in Reality, both *CRITIC*, and *POET*, confeſſing the Juſtice of thoſe Rules of Art, can aftewards in Practice, condemn and approve, perform, and judge in a quite different Manner from what they acknowledge *juſt* and *true*, it plainly ſhews, that, tho' perhaps we are not indigent in *Wit*, yet we want what is of more Conſequence, and can alone raiſe *Wit* to any Dignity and Worth, even *plain HONESTY*, *MANNERS*, and *ſenſe* of that *MORAL TRUTH*, on which (as has been often expreſs'd) *Poetic TRUTH* and *BEAUTY* muſt naturally depend.

*Qui*

*Qui didicit Patriæ quid debeat, & quid Amicis,*
*Quo ſit amore Parens, quo Frater amandus & (Hoſpes*
*Quod ſit conſcripti, quod judicis Officium*
*——— ——— ille profecto*
*Reddere Perſonæ ſcit Convenientia cuiq;.*
Hor. de Arte Poet.

*Tho' this might be ſufficient to juſtify Criticiſm in General, and to expoſe Latitudinarian Scribblers of uſurp'd Fame and Favour with the Town; yet this Noble Lord having given us ſuch valuable Thoughts on this Head, and the preſent Occaſion requiring all we can ſay to juſtify this Undertaking, I ſhall venture to Tranſcribe the Reſt.*

*Odi Prophanum vulgus & arceo*, was in its Time, no doubt, a Generous *Defiance*. The Avant, was natural and proper in its Place; eſpecially where Religion and Virtue were the Poet's Theme. But with our *Moderns*, the Caſe is generally the very Reverſe: And accordingly the *Defiance* or *Avant* ſhou'd run much after this manner. ——— "*As for you Vulgar Souls,* "*mere* Naturals, *who know no* Art, *were ne-*"*ver admitted into the Temple of* Wiſdom, "*nor ever viſited the Sanctuaries of* Wit *or* "Learning, *gather your ſelves together from*

"*all*

" *all Parts, and hearken to the Song, or Tale,*
" *I am about to utter; but for you Men of*
" *Science and Underſtanding, who have Ears*
" *and Judgment, and can weigh Senſe, and*
" *ſcan Syllables, and meaſure Sounds; you,*
" *who by a certain* Art, *diſtinguiſh* Falſe
" *Thought from* True, Correctneſs *from*
" Rudeneſs, *and* Bombaſt *and* Chaos, *from*
" Order *and the* Sublime, *away hence! or*
" *ſtand aloof! whilſt I practice upon the*
" *eaſyneſs of thoſe mean Capacities and Ap-*
" *prehenſions, who make the moſt numerous*
" *Audience, and are the only Competent*
" *Judges of my Labours.*

'Tis ſtrange to ſee how differently the Vanity of Mankind runs in different Times and Seaſons. 'Tis at preſent, the boaſt of almoſt every Enterprizer in the *Muſes* Art,— " *That by his Genius alone, and a*
" *natural Rapidity of Stile and Thought, he*
" *is able to carry all before him; that he plays*
" *with his Buſineſs, does Things in paſſing,*
" *and at a venture, and in the quickeſt period*
" *of Time.* In the Days of *ATTIC Eloquence*, as Works were then truly of another Form and Turn, ſo Workmen were of another Humour, and had their Vanity of a quite contrary kind: They became rather affected, in endeavouring to diſcover the Pains they had taken to Correct; they were glad to inſinuate how labo-

laboriouſly, and with what Expence of Time, they had brought the ſmalleſt Work of theirs (as perhaps a ſingle *Ode*, *Satire*, *Oration*, or *Panegyrick*) to its Perfection. When they had ſo poliſh'd their Piece, and render'd it ſo natural and eaſy, that it ſeem'd only a lucky Flight, a hit of Thought, a flowing vein of Humour, they were then chiefly concern'd, leſt it ſhou'd in *Reallity* paſs for ſuch, and their Artifice remain undiſcover'd. They were willing it ſhou'd be known, how ſerious their Play was; and how Elaborate their Freedom and Facility, that they might, as the agreeable and polite Poet Glancing on himſelf,

*Ludentis ſpeciem dabit, & torquebitur.*
Hor. Ep. 2. Lib. 2.

AND

*Speret idem; ſudet multum fruſtraq; laboret*
*Auſus idem; tantum ſeries, junctura q; pollet.*
Arte Poetica.

Such Accuracy of Workmanſhip, requires a CRITIC's *Eye*, 'tis loſt upon a Vulgar Judgment. Nothing grieves a *real Artiſt* more, than that Indifference of the Public, which ſuffers his Work to paſs *Uncriticiz'd*. Nothing, on the other ſide,

rejoyces

rejoices him more, than the nice View and Inſpection of the accurate *Examiner* and Judge of Work. 'Tis the Mean *Genius*, the Slovenly Performer, who knowing nothing of *True Workmanſhip*, endeavours by the beſt outward Gloſs, and dazling Show, to turn the Eye from a direct and ſteady Survey of his Piece.

What is there that an expert *Muſician* more earneſtly deſires, than to perform his part in the preſence of thoſe who are knowing in his Art? 'Tis to the Ear alone that he applies himſelf, the *Critical* the nice Ear; let his Hearers be of what *Character* they pleaſe; be they naturally Auſtere, Moroſe, or Rigid, no matter, ſo they are but *Critics*, able to Cenſure, remark and ſound every Accord and Symphony. What is there mortifies the good Painter more, than when amidſt his admiring Spectators, there is not one preſent who has been us'd to compare the Hands of different Maſters, or has an Eye to diſtinguiſh the Advantages and Defects of every Stile? Thro' all the Inferiour Orders of *Mechanics*, the Rule is form'd to hold the ſame. In every Science, every Art, the *real Maſters* or *Proficients*, rejoyce in nothing more, than in the thorow Search and Examination of their Performances by the Rules of Art, and niceſt *Criticiſm*.

Why

Why therefore (in the Muſes Name) is it not the ſame with our Pretenders to the Writing Art, our Poets, and Proſe Authors in every kind? Why in this Profeſſion are we found *Critic Haters*, and indulged in this Unlearned Averſion; unleſs it be taken for granted, that as *Wit* and *Learning* ſtand at preſent in our Nation, we are ſtill upon the Foot of *Empiricks* and *Mountebanks*.

From theſe Conſiderations, I take upon me abſolutely to condemn the Faſhionable Cuſtom of Inveighing againſt *CRITICS*, as the common Enemies, the Peſts and *Beautefeus* of the Commonwealth of Wit and Letters. I aſſert, on the contrary, that they are the Props and Pillars of this Building, and that without their Encouragement, and Propagation, we ſhall remain ſtill as *GOTHIC Architects* as ever.

*I ſhall give you but one Quotation more from this noble Lord, for ſhou'd I tranſcribe all that he has Written Admirably on this Subject, it wou'd make my Preface much larger than my Book. After having given us a Notion of the Antients, he proceeds in this manner:*

Our Modern Authors, on the contrary, are turn'd and modell'd (as themſelves confeſs) by the public Reliſh, and current Humour of the Times. They regulate themſelves by the irregular fancy of the World,

World, and frankly own, they are preposterous and absurd, in order to accommodate themselves to the Genius of the Age. In our Days, the *Audience* makes the *Poet*, and the *Bookseller* the *Author*; With what Profit to the *Public*, or what Prospect of lasting Fame and Honour to the *Writer*, let any one who has Judgment imagine.

But tho' our Writers, charge their Faults thus freely on the *Public*, it will, I doubt, appear from many Instances, that this practice is but a mere Imposture, since those Absurdities, which they are the apteſt to commit, are far from being Delightful or Entertaining. We are glad to take up with what our Language can afford us, and by a sort of *Emulation* with other Nations, are forc'd to cry up such Writers of our own, as may best serve us for Comparison. But when we are out of this Spirit, it must be own'd we are not apt to discover any great Fondness or Admiration of our Authors; nor have we any, whom by mutual Consent we make to be our *Standard*. We go to *Plays*, as to other *Shows*, and frequent the *Theatre* as the *Booths*. We read *Epics* and *Dramatics*, as we do *Satires* and *Lampoons*; for we must of necessity know what Wit, as well as what Scandal is stirring: Read we

must

muſt, let the Writers be ever ſo indifferent; and this perhaps, may be ſome Occaſion of the Lazineſs and Negligence of our Authors, who obſerving this Need, which our Curioſity brings on us, and making an exact Calculation in the way of Trade, to know juſtly the Quality and Quantity of the publick Demand, feed us from Hand to Mouth; reſolving not to overſtock the Market, or be at the Pains of more Correctneſs or Wit, than is abſolutely neceſſary to carry on the Traffic.

*This Noble Lord has ſaid ſo much here, and ſo juſtly in the Behalf of* Criticiſm, *that I ſhall not preſume to add any more. But I cannot conclude without a Word about the following Criticiſm. The Reader muſt not expect ſo merry and good Entertainment here, as in the firſt Rehearſal; that noble Author had Works to expoſe, in which there was a ſprightly Dulneſs and Abſurdities that run naturally into Ridicule. But the Works which are the Subject of our preſent Conſiderations, are ſo ſtor'd with a heavy Stupidity, that nothing has made them worth Notice, but the Succeſs they have moſt of them met with from the Town, eſpecially the laſt, which is yet the moſt Stupid, Abſurd, and Abandon'd of them all. There is ſo conſtant a Luſt of ſaying Nothing in a great many Words, that little Entertaining can be drawn from them.*

*I have therefore only taken this manner of Dialogue, to make the Remarks the more easily past thro', as being naturally more Amusing than the plain and regular Criticism. I do assure the Reader that I have not been prompted by either Ill-nature or Envy; I hope I am entirely free from both in my Temper; and indeed the Author, under our Consideration, has left no manner of room for the later; I cannot so easily clear my self of Disdain and Indignation.*

Si Natura negat facit Indignatio Versus.

# *The Persons Names.*

Mr. *Freeman.* — A Gentleman of a good Taste and Learning.

Mr. *Truewit.* — A Man of Wit and good Taste.

Sir *Indolent Easie.* — A Man of Wit, but one who is, or seems to be pleas'd with every Thing and every Writer.

*Sawny Dapper.* — A young Poet of the Modern stamp, an easy Versifyer, Conceited and a Contemner secretly of all others.

Mr. *Bays.* — A Pedantic, Reciting Poet, admir'd by the Mob and himself, but justly contemn'd by Men of Sense and Learning, and a despiser of Rules and Art.

Scene the *Rose Tavern* Covent-Garden.

# A New REAHEARSAL, OR, BAYS the Younger.

## ACT. I. SCENE I.

*A Room in the Roſe Tavern* Covent-Garden.

*Freeman* and *True-Wit.*

*Free.* WELL *Dick*, Here's your welcome to Town.

[ *Drinks.*

*True. Joſeph* I thank thee, there is nothing can make the Town more agreeable to me, after ſo long an Abſence, than an Evenings Converſe with thee now and then, diſengag'd from all the Impertinence, which generally renders Converſation here ſo intolerable. *Free.*

*Free.* Our Town Impertinence is at leaſt ſo much the more tolerable, than that of the Country, as it has more of Variety and Pertneſs.

*True.* I ſhou'd as ſoon believe Pain were to be render'd ſo by being of various kinds. 'Tis true your Coxcombs are more pert, than ours in the Country; but that renders them the more troubleſom and talkative; whereas a Country Fool may paſs, by his Silence, on us for a Man of Thought.

*Free.* Oh! Sir, if your grave Sot be to your Gouſt, you may be furniſh'd with a Diſh or two every Night within the Precincts of *Covent-Garden.* There is no Reſort of the Wits but are repleniſh'd with your ſolemn Liſtners, who with their Nods keep Time to the Talkers, and ſeem to Approve and Underſtand all that is ſaid.

*True.* Juſt as it was I find when I us'd *Will*'s; but pray Sir does that Ancient Rendezvous of the *Beaux Eſprits* hold its Ground? And do Men now, as formerly, become *WITS* by ſipping Coffee and Tea with *Wycherly* and the reigning Poets?

*Free.* No, no, there has been great Revolutions in this State of Affairs ſince you left us; *Buttons* is now the Eſtabliſh'd *Wits* Coffee-houſe, and all the Young Scriblers of the Times pay their Attendance

dance Nightly there, to keep up their Pretenſions to Senſe and Underſtanding.

*True.* And who and who honeſt *Jo*, are the Diſpenſers of Fame now? What bright Spirits entertain the Town with their Pens?

*Free.* Ah *Dick!* ſuch a Race of Poets, as never were ſeen or heard of before. A tolerable knack at Verſification ſets any Man up for an Author; but as for force of Genius, Art, Imagery, and true Senſe, they are ſtill thought very needleſs Qualifications in a Poet. Nay they are ſo very averſe to them, that whoever preſumes to advance any thing in their favour, is ſure to have all the Votes of the Houſe againſt him; for they think Ignorance is the Mother of *Wit*, and Poetry, as the Papiſts believe it the Mother of Devotion.

*True.* By this I find the Town is not yet much chang'd in their deteſtable Taſte; and I muſt confeſs, I always thought that there was hardly any where to be found a more inſipid Race of Mortals, than thoſe whom we Moderns are pleaſed to Complement with the Name of Poets, meerly for having attain'd the Chiming Faculty of a Language, with an Injudicious random uſe of *Wit* and *Fancy*.

*Free.* True; yet the Man who truly and in a juſt Senſe deſerves the Name of *Poet*,

and who, as a real Maſter, can deſcribe both *Men* and *Manners*, and give to an Action its juſt Body and Proportions; as he is a very different Creature, ſo he will find leſs Eſteem and Popularity.

*True.* Such a Poet, indeed, is a ſecond *Maker*, like that Sovereign Artiſt or Univerſal Plaſtic Nature, he forms a *WHOLE*, Coherent and Proportion'd in it ſelf, with the due Subjection of Subordinancy of conſtituent Parts; he Notes the Boundaries of the Paſſions, and knows their exacteſt *Tones* and *Meaſures*; by which he juſtly repreſents them, marks the *Sublime* of the Sentiments and Action, and diſtinguiſhes the *Beautiful* from the *Deform'd*, the *Amiable* from the *Odious*.

*Free.* But our preſent Authors, for the moſt Part, at leaſt the moſt Taking and Celebrated of them, are not of this Kind. For whatever is Capricious and Odd, is ſure to create Diverſion, to thoſe who look no farther; and where there is nothing like *Nature*, there is no room for the Troubleſome part of *Thought* and *Contemplation*. 'Tis the Perfection of our Groteſque Painters, to keep as far from Nature as is poſſible; to find a Likeneſs in their Works, is to find the greateſt Fault imaginable. A Natural Connexion is a *Slur*, a Coherence, a Deſign, a *Meaning*, is againſt their

their purpoſe, and deſtroys the very Spirit and Genius of their Workmanſhip.

True. *What things are theſe who wou'd be*
*Poets Thought?*
*By Nature not Inſpir'd, nor Learning Taught.*

But this ſtill keeps up to the Character of the Wits, as they have been all my Time; Fuſtian and Rant have paſt for the Sublime, and ———

*Free.* But thoſe were Men of Spirit to our Scriblers now, their Tragedies wou'd make you Laugh heartily; but thoſe of our chief Hero are ſo plentifully ſtor'd with Opium, that they make you ſleep.

*Our King return'd, and Baniſh'd Peace reſtor'd,*
*The Muſe run Mad to ſee her Exil'd Lord;*
*On the rack'd Stage the Bedlam Heroes roar'd,*
*And ſcarce coü'd ſpeak one Reaſonable Word.*

As a Noble Critic has obſerv'd; but the *Almanzors* and *Maximins*, had a ſprightly flowing Verſe, and often ſome good Topics, Reflections and Lines; but now you will be puzled to find one good Line in many Plays of our moſt taking Authors. They are infinitely more Abſurd in their Plots, their Manners, and Sentiments, and yet do not make amends with the leaſt

Proverbial Line or Sentence, that a Man can carry away to juſtify his having thrown away his Time and his Money in hearing and ſeeing them.

*Enter Drawer.*

*Draw.* Sir, there is Sir *Indolent Eaſie* below asks for Mr. *Freeman.*

*Free.* Oh! deſire him to walk up.

[*Exit Drawer.*

*True.* Pray who is this Noble Knight you have Invited up Stairs?

*Free.* Why, Sir, this ſame Sir *INDOLENT EASIE*, is a Man of Letters, and a Celebrated *WIT*; and tho' he has perform'd in Poetry with a great and juſt Applauſe, Judges, or Affects to Judge abominably: He is exceſſively Civil to all Authors; but whilſt he raiſes the Vanity of a Man of Merit by his Complaiſance to him, he mortifies him with the Praiſe of ſome Scoundrel Scribler of the Times, who has none. He is Friendly to the Unfortunate, and ſeems to take Pleaſure in giving Aſſiſtance to the Unhappy; and his Affectation of being diſpleas'd with nothing, makes every thing agreeable; I know nothing that he ex reſſes any Averſion to but a *Critic*, tho' he has the leaſt Reaſon in the World to fear him himſelf. But paying a profeſſed

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Deference to Succeſs, he thinks that ſufficient to determine the Goodneſs of any Performance: But here he is.

*Enter Sir* Indolent.

Sir *Indolent* your moſt Humble Servant.

Sir *Ind.* *Joſeph Freeman* yours ſincerely.

*Free.* Sir, *Indolent*, give me leave to recommend this Country Friend of mine to your Knowledge.

Sir *Ind.* Sir, I ſhall be proud to Rank you in the number of my Friends. Pray, Sir, what's your Friends Name? for I love to ſpeak eaſily and familiarly.

*Free.* *True-wit*, Sir *Indolent*.

Sir *Ind.* *Truewit!* A very Ancient Family I profeſs; but if I am not miſtaken, not very numerous.

*Free.* They have ſucceeded Son and Father, without any Brothers, Sir, for many Generations; but I fear the Family will be Extinct, if we prevail not with my Friend to Marry; he grows an Old Batchelor, and that is ill Policy in thoſe who muſt keep up a Name, leſt his Children fall into the Hands of Bad Tutors.

Sir *Ind.* 'Foregad I am no Enemy to Marriage; but for my ſelf I remain ſingle, becauſe I wou'd avoid all Diſquiet. But *Jo.* I left a Friend of yours below, who

will be glad to ſee you, when he has diſpatch'd ſome Bookſellers who teize him for Copy.

*Free.* Some Author by that; and a Modern Author, as the Commodity now goes is not ſo agreeable a Diſh to my Friend and me, as you imagine Sir *Indolent.* But which of this Fry is it I pray you?

Sir *Ind.* Why honeſt *Sawny Dapper*, 'foregad, a very pretty young Fellow; he writes very agreeably, and is much in Vogue with the Town.

*Free.* Oh *Dick*! one of the moſt Empty and moſt Conceited of the whole Tribe.

Sir *Ind.* Nay, prithee dear *Jo.* be not ſo Ill-natur'd.

*Free.* Nay, prithee Sir *Indolent* be not ſo Good-natur'd, as to like every Pretender; you know better, and do a Miſchief to Merit by your Civility to, and Careſſing of ſuch as have none.

Sir *Ind.* Nay, 'foregad *Sawny* has a very pretty Genius, is very Harmonious, and Writes a great many fine things, ask the Ladies elſe.

*Free.* The Ladies are wonderful Judges of Art, indeed, of which they know not one Syllable; and as for Nature, it has been ſo corrupted by a courſe of ill Diet in Poetics, that they can draw no aſſiſtance from thence.

*True.* Give me leave, Sir *Indolent*, to deliver my Country Notion of this matter; you

you ſay he has a pretty *Genius*: To ſay nothing of the deminitive *Pretty*, a Cenius alone is not ſufficient to ſet up an Author. The Horſe alone can never make the *Horſeman*, nor the Limbs the *Wreſtler* or *Dancer*; no more can a Genius alone make a *Poet*, or good Parts a *Writer*, in any conſiderable Kind. The Skill and Grace of Writing is founded in *Knowledge* and *Good Senſe*. *Horace* has decided this long ago.

*Natura ſieret laudabile Carmen an Arte*
*Quæſitum eſt; Ego nec ſtudium ſine divite Vena*
*Nec Rude* quid profit *Ingenium video, alterius*
*Altera poſcit Opem Res, & conjurat amice.* (ſic Hor.

*Some think that Poets may be form'd by Art,*
*Others maintain that Nature makes them ſo.*
*I neither ſee, what Art without a Vein,*
*Or* Wit *without the help of Art can do:*
*But mutually need each others Aid.*
ROSCOMMON's Verſion.

Sir *Ind.* I confeſs, Gentlemen, that were I to Write my ſelf, I wou'd have a true and juſt Regard to both Art and Nature; but then I do it, becauſe I find it very agreable to my Humour; I can't pleaſe my ſelf without Order, and the Harmony of Parts. But 'foregad if the obtaining theſe Perfections were troubleſom to me, I wou'd

not give my ſelf any Concern about it. Perhaps theſe poor Gentlemen find a difficulty in theſe Points, perhaps they cannot with all their Application attain them. Wou'd you be ſo unreaſonable to require that of them which they cannot do?

*Free.* Let them Continue then courteous Readers, and not preſume to Scribble, and aſſume an Air from a falſe ſucceſs, to make them greater Coxcombs than they would be without it.

Sir *Ind.* 'Foregad you're too ſevere, muſt none but Ciet-Cats have leave to —— Scribbling's the Diabetis of the Mind; and when a Man's infected with it, he can't help clapping Pen to Paper, and then what enſues you generally find. Beſides, what need they take pains to arrive at Art, when they do their Buſineſs without it. What Plays have taken more than thoſe of Mr. *BAYS*, ev'n from his firſt Appearance to this day. If his Plays take, what wou'd you have more? And 'forgad I think the *Ambitious Stepmother* is an excellent Tragedy as Tragedies go now. Then here's his *Tamerlane*, *Ulyſſes*, *Fair Penitent*, and laſt and greateſt of All, *Jane Shore*. Who can contend with him? the Ladies admire them, the Lords encourage them, and every one goes to them, what wou'd you have more?

*True.*

*True.* One Man of Learning, Art and Underſtanding, faithfully and ſincerely declare his Approbation of any one of them: For I confeſs we in the Country were wonderfully ſupriz'd to find that they were ſo very well receiv'd, without any one Beauty through them all, that we cou'd find from the reading them.

Sir *Ind.* Nay, for the Reading them, I muſt own I never gave my ſelf the Trouble to do that; I was ſatisfied with ſeeing them, and was active to promote the Author's Benefit on their being Acted.

*Free.* Well faith, Sir *Indolent*, you ought to do ſome Penance for ſuch a ſupererogatory Tranſgreſſion; eſpecially ſince I know you have been ſlack enough in encouraging much better Performances, becauſe they did not take ſo well. *True-wit*, Seat your ſelf on the other ſide the Knight, whilſt I ſecure him on this; I am reſolv'd to mortify him with our Examination of them all, by which he ſhall ſee, what an Incubus he has hugg'd with ſo much Ardour, under the diſguiſe of Succeſs.

Sir *Ind.* 'Foregad, Gentlemen, I can't bear it, I muſt be gon, I have Buſineſs.

*Free.* You ſhall not ſtir one Foot, Sir *Indolent*, till we have perform'd the Operation — You are Maſter of ſo much good Senſe, that it is an Act of Humanity to

cure you of the only monſtrous failing you have. Come, 'tis in vain to ſtruggle; ſubmit patiently, and the Cure will be effected with the leſs trouble.

Sir *Ind.* Well, 'foregad if it muſt be ſo I will be patient; but handle my good Friend with as much tenderneſs as poſſible, I beg you.

*True.* Well, Sir *Indolent*, for your ſake, we will not inſiſt on Peccadillo's, we'll paſs over his dull Inſipidneſs, and a little heavy Nonſenſe or ſo, without any Notice, if that will ſatisfy you. We will begin with his firſt *Play*, from whence he deriv'd his Authority, only premiſing a few neceſſary Preliminaries; as to the Nature of Tragedy, on which we ſhall build our Criticiſms.

Sir *Ind.* Well, Gentlemen, what you pleaſe.

*Free.* The Antients ———

Sir *Ind.* Phoo, What ſignify the Antients, ſince they are unknown to our Wits of a Court and Town Education, who can go no farther back into Antiquity, 'foregad, than their Pedigree can ſhew them. Beſides Wit now is ſomething like our Paper Credit; the Men of Buſineſs agree to give that the force of Money, and the Men of Pleaſure, This the force of *Wit*. They are both arbitrary; but I have done, I only offer this by the way.

*Free.*

*Free.* I am not now talking to one of thoſe ignorant Scriblers, who are forc'd to fly to Anarchy in Writing, becauſe the eſtabliſhment of Order, Subordination and Harmony, wou'd put an end to their Pretences to Reputation as Authors. No, Sir *Indolent*, I am ſpeaking to a Man of Reaſon, a Man of Letters, a Poet, who has ſhown himſelf worthy of that Name, by his Performance.

Sir *Ind.* 'Foregad *Jo*, you do me too much Honour; but I'll take the Bribe and be ſilent.

*Free.* I mean no Bribe nor Complement, becauſe it is no more than Truth; but then I muſt tell you it aggravates your Fault in your Indulgence of every Scribler that appears.

Sir *Ind.* Alas! poor Men, they do their beſt. But Sir to your Point.

*Free.* I do perſuade my ſelf that you will allow, that the Perfection of whatever Art we derive from the Antients, is to be judged by the Antients and their Practice, who were the Founders of that Art. I will not deny but there may be Improvements made in an old Art, as we find in the Mathematics: But then they muſt be real Improvements, and not Things deſtructive of the very Art it ſelf. *Euclid* to this day is the Foundation of *Geometry*, and all the

Learned

Learned Books that have been written on that Subject, have been but a ſort of Notes and Explanations of that Author, I mean as far as the Elements of that Art, which are ſtill the ſame. I am not enquiring into the Modern Improvements of *Geometry*, they are Great and Noble, affording the moſt ſolid Grounds of a moſt rational Philoſophy. But then the Modern Authors have not inverted the Ancient Art, acts not Diametrically, contrary to the Rules eſtabliſh'd by *Euclid*.

*True*. This I take to be very plain, and therefore it needs not any further Proof. I farther think it pretty evident, that *Tragedy* was the Invention and Product of *Athens*, and that the Rules which *Ariſtotle* has given us, were Receiv'd and Eſtabliſh'd in that City, they being indeed drawn from the Practice of the beſt of the *Athenian* Poets before his Time, and exactly agreeable to Reaſon and Nature.

Sir *Ind*. I can't deny the Fact.

*Free*. It is pretty Remarkable, that as all the Politer Arts had their Riſe from this little Commonwealth, ſo they all Arriv'd to ſuch a Perfection there, that no other Nation has yet been able to improve them. Their *Statues* is one Proof, which notwithſtanding the Injury of Time, afford yet the higheſt Praiſe to that Maſter who comes

neareſt

neareſt to their Excellence; and this was the utmoſt Aim of *Angelo*, *Bernini*, &c.

*True.* I know not whether I am in the right or not, yet I am of Opinion, that the Addition made to the *Greek* Orders in Architecture, has added no Beauty to that Art.

*Free.* *Architecture* is perhaps founded on more Arbitrary Principles, than *Poetry*, *Painting*, and *Oratory*; in which I believe it wou'd be no difficult matter to prove the *Romans* never equal'd the *Greeks*; for indeed it is with great difficulty (if poſſible) that a Copier can reach the Original.

Sir *Ind.* The ſum of what you aim at Gentlemen, by what you have ſaid, ſeems to me to imply, that as Tragedy was a Poem invented and made perfect, and adorn'd with all its Rules of arriving at Perfection and Nature by the *Greeks*; if we will call ours by the ſame Name, and pretend it to be the ſame Poem, it muſt be judg'd by the ſame Rules?

*Free.* You take us, Sir *Indolent*, perfectly well, for that is what we deſign by all we have urg'd; and that I believe, Sir *Indolent*, you will grant us, without any farther Proof, as being a very reaſonable Poſtulatum.

Sir *Ind.* 'Foregad, Gentlemen, I won't differ with you for Trifles ——— I muſt own what you ſay to be true.

*True.*

*True.* From thence we ſhall only infer, that the Principal Care of the Poet ought to be employ'd in the principal part of the Poem, the *Fable*; and that any Play that is defective groſly in that, muſt be a deteſtable *Tragedy*; that next to that, the *Manners* are to be taken Care of, as that they be *Good*, that is, *Well-mark'd*, *Convenient*, *Like*, *Equal*, and *Neceſſary*, and that the Sentiments be the genuine and natural Reſult of the Manners, that is, ſuch Thoughts as a Perſon endow'd with ſuch Manners, under ſuch Paſſions and ſuch Circumſtances, wou'd think; for the Temper of the Perſon gives different Sentiments of the ſame Things, and the ſame Circumſtances. It is therefore the Poet's Buſineſs to enter into the Nature of the Character he draws, and give ſuch Sentiments, as the Manners of the Dramatic Perſon require.

*Free.* The laſt thing, and of leaſt Conſequence is the Diction. But tho' it be of the leaſt Conſequence of any of the Eſſential parts of Tragedy, yet it muſt be allow'd of very great Moment; and the more, becauſe we have no Example of any Man, who has been eminent for the other parts of this Poem, who has not likewiſe excell'd in the Diction, as *Homer*, *Sophocles*, *Euripides*, *Virgil*, &c. tho' *Ariſtotle* ſeems to have had ſome old Play, in his View, when

when he ſuppos'd a good Tragedy might be without the force of Diction or Numbers.

*True.* In this Age, the Poet is oblig'd to take a more than ordinary Care of the Language; becauſe that is only capable of recommending his Play to the Town; tho', I muſt confeſs, it is no eaſy task to give them what they call fine Language, and at the ſame time, have the Beauty of *Fable*, *Manners*, and *Sentiments*; for the Perfection of the *Drama* being ACTION, (it being, indeed, the Imitation of an Action) thoſe Plays, that are moſt calculated for fine Speeches, have the leaſt, nay, little or no Action at all; or if at any time they have, the Poets are oblig'd to ſtretch their Entertainment to an unmeaſurable Length.

*Free.* I ſhall only add to what has been ſaid, that the End and Aim of *Tragedy*, is to move Fear or Compaſſion, or both; and therefore what ever Fable of a Tragedy is not Calculated for this End, is Faulty and not Tragical.

Sir *Ind.* Well, allowing all you have ſaid, for in Reaſon it appears to me but juſt; pray proceed to your Buſineſs, that I may paſs thro' my Torture the ſooner.

*Free.* To that we now come; the *Ambitious Stepmother*, the very Name of the Play is wrong; for Ambition is not properly a Dramatic Paſſion, it has too much of

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Sedateneſs, 'tis too particular, it extends not to the general Life, as Anger, Curioſity, Raſhneſs, Obſtinacy, and the like, which render, by Indulgence, the Common or General Life of Man uneaſy, and often very Unhappy. But not to ſtand upon Trifles, where there are more Subſtantial Errors, let us go to the Plot or Fable. The Action imitated by the Fable, if there be any, is the Eſtabliſhing *Artaban* on the Throne of *Arſaces*; this, in it ſelf, can have nothing Tragical, unleſs it can be made to move, or does move Terror or Compaſſion, or both.

*True.* But I think it will be pretty plain, that thisFable, or Action, is not calculated for either of thoſe Views. The Story as well as I can reduce it to any form, is thus:

*Arſaces* King of *Perſia*, being on his Death Bed, his Wife *Artimiſa* (Widow to a great Lord of *Perſia*, who was Murder'd in Battle to make way for the King) in Conjunction with *Mirza*, the firſt Miniſter of State, and *Magas* Prieſt of the Sun, contrive to advance *Artaban* the Son of *Artemiſa* by the King, to the Throne, tho' the Eldeſt Son *Artaxerxes*, a brave and virtuous Prince, was Alive, and Meritorious of the Crown. This Prince and his Father-in-Law *Memnon*, and his Miſtreſs or Wife *Ameſtris*, return this

Day

Day from Baniſhment to *Perſepolis*, under the Advantage of a Sacred Holiday, on which every Body was ſafe by the Fundamentals of Religion. The Prieſt, the Queen, and the firſt Miniſter contrive to ſeize them in the Temple, to ſhock all the People with the Sacrilege, tho' they might have ſeiz'd them by the King's Authority (for all that we can ſee to the contrary) and ſo without any hazard or buſtle, might have been either ſent into Baniſhment again, or more decently diſpatch'd.

Well, they are ſeiz'd in the Temple, the Prince's Bride is forc'd from him by *Mirza*'s Order; the Old Fellow at that odd Time, having a mighty mind to a young bit of Fleſh, addreſſes to her the Minute after he was thought by her to have Murder'd her Father and Husband, and ſtruggl'd with by *Mirza*, who proving every way too weak, yet troubleſome, ſhe by good luck finds a Dagger by his ſide (but how it came there no body can gheſs) and ſtabs the prime Miniſter, who getting the Dagger again, ſhe having taken care to throw it down pretty near him, he makes *Orchanes* drag her to him that he may ſtab her, which the Ruffian, Captain of the Queen's Guard, does without any ſcruple. She is no ſooner ſtabb'd but reels out that *Artaxerxes* and *Memnon* might come in; *Cleone*, *Mirza*'s Daughter,

Daughter, perfectly Virtuous, &c. falls in Love with *Artaxerxes*, and comes to set him at Liberty, killing herself to convince him of her Truth. So *Artaxerxes* and *Memnon*, coming into *Mirza*'s House by *Cleone*'s Key, found *Mirza* Dead to their Satisfaction; but soon *Ameſtris* returns to the same place, ready to drop down dead, having Bled all this while without any help; well, she comes in, tells her Fate and Dies; *Artaxerxes* stabs himself and Dies; and *Memnon*, that he might not be stab'd too, runs his Head against a Wall and knocks out his Brains. Thus all the Rivals of *Artaban*'s Power were remov'd; but he, on hearing of the Captivity of his Enemies, takes a freak to set them at Liberty, and revolts from his Mother, but comes too late; however he is very angry with *Artemiſa*, and sets a Guard on her, assuring the Audience, That the Horrors of this Night shall guide his future Sway; he will not be Guilty of Sacrilege or Bloody Treachery, will keep all his Promises even to his Enemies, and the like; so that he is sure the Gods will walk Hand in Hand with him, and guard that Power they trusted to his Hand.

This is what we must call the Plot or Fable, which is indeed a strange kind of Medley, and has nothing either Rational

or

or Dramatic in it; it has no *Moral*, or none of any uſe; and is indeed directed by *Artaban* himſelf only to his own public Conduct, in which the Audience have not the leaſt Intereſt or Concern; it moves neither Terror nor Compaſſion, nor are the Manners any way *neceſſary* to the end propos'd. Nay, *Mirza*'s Luſt had nothing to do with the bringing *Artaban* to the Throne, but muſt have totally diſappointed it, had not *Orchanes*, contrary to the Honour of a Soldier and a Man, villainouſly forc'd *Ameſtris* to the dying, prime Miniſter to be ſtabb'd; which was highly improbable, if not impoſſible, that *Orchanes* ſhou'd do, even for his own Intereſt, ſince he might have made better Terms for himſelf (which cou'd be the only motive of an Action to a Man of his Character) with *Artaxerxes*, than with a dying Villain, who by Conſequence cou'd do him no manner of Service.

*Free.* *Mirza* is repreſented as a Cunning Man, but his Conduct with *Ameſtris*, is the moſt ſilly, that an unruly Boy cou'd be guilty of. As his falling in Love at that Juncture, and his deſign'd Rape, were without any manner of Uſe to the Cataſtrophe or the Deſign of the Play, ſo was it manag'd like a Fool; his Age and Weakneſs in the Attempt, diſcover that he might

might have delay'd the Execution till all was ſafe, and nothing cou'd contradict his Will. He tells us it is but Luſt mingled with Revenge; and then it was natural for him to defer his ſalacious Entertainment for a few Hours, when he might have taken a ſecurer way to his Satisfaction, ev'n by the Rules of Common Senſe, than by a Struggle with Youth prepoſſeſs'd againſt him by Love and Hatred, the deteſtation of his Murder of her Lord and her Father. Since the Author was reſolv'd to make him a Villain, He ſhou'd not have made him a Fool too, becauſe he had call'd him a cunning Politic Perſon. *Orchanes*, or many of his Domeſtics, who are always diligent in promoting their Lord's Vices for their own Benefit, wou'd have held her, whilſt the Impotent Maſter might have nothing to do but to take his beaſtly ſatisfaction of her. From this and a living Prime Miniſter, the Capt. of the Guards might have aſſur'd himſelf of ſome Reward, which he cou'd not expect from dying *Mirza*. Humane Nature is not ſo very depraved as to do Villanies only for Villany's ſake; ſo that *Orchanes* had not the leaſt Reaſon to obey his cruelty in his laſt Agonies of Life without any Reſpect, ſince he did not know but *Artaxerxes* and *Memnon* had made their Eſcape, and ſo he might be puniſh'd for a Deed, from which

which he cou'd expect no manner of Benefit. But indeed *Orchanes* is not puniſh'd at all, but goes off triumphant in the poſſeſſion of his Place, for all that we can find to the Contrary.

*True.* 'Tis plain that the Story of this Play was taken from the Eſtabliſhing *Solomon* on the Throne of *David*, by *Bathſheba*, *Nathan* the Prophet, *Zadok* the Prieſt, *&c.* And if the Poet had follow'd the Holy Hiſtory more cloſely, there wou'd have been no need of thoſe monſtrous Characters of *Mirza*, *Magas*, &c.

The plain Hiſtory is thus in the firſt Book of *Kings*, Chap. 1. 5, 6. " Then *Adonijah* the Son of *Haggith* exalted himſelf, " ſaying, I will be King, and he prepar'd " himſelf Chariots and Horſemen, and " fifty Men to run before him. And his " Father had not diſpleas'd him at any " Time in ſaying, Why haſt thou done ſo? " And he alſo was a very goodly Man, and " his Mother bore him after *Abſolom*. And " he conferr'd with *Joab* the Son of *Zeruiah*, and with *Abiather* the Prieſt, and " they following *Adonijah* helped him. But " *Zadok* the Prieſt, and *Benaiah* the Son of " *Jehoiada*, and *Nathan* the Prophet, and " *Shimei*, and *Rei*, and the mighty Men " that belong'd to *David*, were not with " *Adonijah*. And *Adonijah* ſlew Sheep and " Oxen,

" Oxen, and fat Cattel by the Stone of
" *Zoheleth* which is by *En-Rogel*, and cal-
" led all his Brethren the Kings Sons, and
" all the Men of *Judah* the Kings Servants.
" But *Nathan* the Prophet, and *Benaiah*,
" and the Mighty Men, and *Solomon* his
" Brother he called not. Wherefore *Na-*
" *than* ſpake unto *Batſheba* the Mother of
" *Solomon*, ſaying, Haſt thou not heard
" that *Adonijah* the Son of *Haggith* doth
" Reign, and *David* our Lord know-
" eth it not? Now therefore come, let
" me, I pray thee, give thee Counſel, that
" thou mayſt ſave thine own Life, and
" and the Life of thy Son *Solomon*. Go,
" and get thee in unto King *David*, and
" ſay unto him, Didſt not thou my Lord,
" O King, ſware unto thine Handmaid,
" ſaying, aſſuredly *Solomon* thy Son ſhall
" reign after me, and he ſhall ſit upon my
" Throne? Why then doth *Adonijah* reign?
" Behold, while thou yet talkeſt there
" with the King, I alſo will come in after
" thee and confirm thy Words. And *Bath-*
" *ſheba* went in unto the King, into the
" Chamber; and the King was very Old,
" and *Abiſhag* the *Shunamite* Miniſtred unto
" the King. And *Bathſheba* bowed and
" did obeyſance unto the King; and the
" King ſaid, What wouldſt thou? And
" ſhe ſaid unto him, my Lord, thou ſwareſt

" by

" by the Lord thy God unto thine Handmaid
" ſaying, Aſſuredly *Solomon* thy Son ſhall
" reign after me, and he ſhall ſit upon my
" Throne: And now behold, *Adonijah* reign-
" eth; and my Lord the King thou know-
" eſt it not. And he hath ſlain Oxen, and
" fat Cattel, and Sheep in abundance, and
" hath called all the Sons of the King, and
" *Abiathar* the Prieſt, and *Joab* the Captain
" of the Hoſt: But *Solomon* thy Servant
" hath he not called. And thou, my
" Lord, O King, the Eyes of all *Iſrael* are
" upon thee, that thou ſhouldſt tell them
" who ſhall ſit on the Throne of my Lord
" the King after him. Otherwiſe it ſhall
" come to paſs, when my Lord the King
" ſhall ſleep with his Fathers, that I and
" my Son *Solomon* ſhall be counted Offen-
" ders. And lo, while ſhe yet talked with
" the King, *Nathan* the Prophet alſo came
" in. And they told the King, ſaying,
" Behold *Nathan* the Prophet. And when
" he was come in before the King, he bow-
" ed himſelf before the King with his
" Face to the Ground. And *Nathan* ſaid,
" My Lord O King, haſt thou ſaid, *Ado-*
" *nijah* ſhall reign after me, and he ſhall
" ſit upon my Throne? For he is gone
" down this day, and hath ſlain Oxen and
" fat Cattel, and Sheep in abundance, and
" hath called all the Kings Sons, and the
" Captains

" Captains of the Hoſt, and *Abiather* the
" Prieſt, and behold, they Eat and Drink
" before him, and ſay, God ſave King
" *Adonijah*. But me, even me thy Ser-
" vant, and *Zadock* the Prieſt, and *Benaiah*
" the Son of *Jehoida*, and thy ſervant *So-*
" *lomon* hath he not called. Is this thing
" done by my Lord the King, and thou
" haſt not ſhewed it unto thy Servant, who
" ſhall ſit upon the Throne of my Lord
" the King after him? Then *David* an-
" ſwer'd, and ſaid, Call me *Bathſheba*; and
" ſhe came into the Kings preſence, and
" ſtood before the King. And the King
" ſware, and ſaid, as the Lord liveth that
" redeemed my Soul out of all diſtreſs,
" even as I ſware unto thee by the Lord
" God of *Iſrael*, ſaying, Aſſuredly *Solomon*
" thy Son ſhall reign after me, and he ſhall
" ſit upon my Throne in my ſtead; even ſo
" will I certainly do this day. Then *Bath-*
" *ſheba* bowed with her Face to the Earth,
" and did Reverence to the King, and
" ſaid, Let my Lord King *David* live for
" ever. And King *David* ſaid, Call me
" *Zadok* the Prieſt, and *Nathan* the Pro-
" phet, and *Benaiah* the Son of *Jehoida*.
" And they came before the King. And
" the King alſo ſaid unto them, Take
" with you the Servants of your Lord,
" and cauſe *Solomon* my Son to ride upon
" mine

" mine own Mule, and bring him down
" to *Gihon*. And let *Zadok* the Prieſt, and
" *Nathan* the Prophet anoint him there
" King over *Iſrael*: And blow ye with the
" Trumpet, and ſay, God ſave King *So-*
" *lomon*. Then ye ſhall come up after him,
" that he may come and ſit upon my Throne;
" for he ſhall be King in my ſtead: And I
" have appointed him to be Ruler over
" *Iſrael* and over *Judah*. And *Benaiah* the
" Son of *Jehoida*, anſwered the King, and
" ſaid, *Amen*: The Lord God of my Lord
" the King ſay ſo to. As the Lord hath
" been with my Lord the King, even ſo
" be he with *Solomon*, and make his Throne
" greater than the Throne of my Lord King
" *David*. So *Zadok* the Prieſt, and *Nathan*
" the Prophet, and *Benaiah* the Son of *Jehoi-*
" *ada*, and the *Cherethites*, and the *Pelethites*
" went down, and cauſed *Solomon* to ride
" upon King *David*'s Mule, and brought him
" to *Gihon*. And *Zadok* the Prieſt took an
" Horn of Oyl out of the Tabernacle, and
" anointed *Solomon*, and they blew the Trum-
" pet, and all the People ſaid, God ſave
" King *Solomon*. And all the People came
" up after him, and the People Piped with
" Pipes, and rejoyced with exceeding
" great Joy, ſo that the Earth rent with
" the ſound of them. And *Adonijah* and
" all the Gueſts that were with him, heard

" it as they had made an end of Eating:
" And when *Joab* heard the Sound of the
" Trumpet, he ſaid, Wherefore is this
" noiſe of the City, being in an uproar?
" And while he yet ſpake, behold, *Jona-*
" *than* the Son of *Abiathar* the Prieſt came,
" and *Adonijah* ſaid unto him, Come in,
" for thou art a Valiant Man, and bringeſt
" good Tidings. And *Jonathan* anſwered,
" and ſaid to *Adonijah*, Verily our Lord
" King *David* hath made *Solomon* King.
" And the King hath ſent with him, *Zadok*
" the Prieſt, and *Nathan* the Prophet, and
" *Benaiah* the Son of *Jehoiada*, and the
" *Cherethites*, and the *Pelethites*, and they
" have cauſed him to ride upon the King's
" Mule. And *Zadok* the Prieſt, and *Na-*
" *than* the Prophet, have anointed him
" King in *Gihon*; and they are come up
" from thence rejoycing, ſo that the City
" rang again: This is the noiſe that ye
" have heard: And alſo *Solomon* ſitteth on
" the Throne of the Kingdom. And more-
" over, the King's Servants came to bleſs
" our Lord King *David*, ſaying, God make
" the Name of *Solomon* greater than thy
" Name, and his Throne greater than thy
" Throne. And the King bowed himſelf
" upon the Bed. And alſo thus ſaid the
" King, Bleſſed be the Lord God of *Iſrael*,
" which hath given one to ſit on my Throne

" this

" this Day, mine Eyes even ſeeing it. And
" all the Gueſt that were with *Adonijah*,
" were afraid, and roſe up, and went e-
" very Man his way. And *Adonijah* feared
" becauſe of *Solomon*, and aroſe, and went,
" and caught hold on the Horns of the
" Altar. And it was told *Solomon*, ſaying,
" Behold *Adonijah* feareth King *Solomon*;
" for lo, he hath caught hold of the
" Horns of the Altar, ſaying, Let King
" *Solomon* ſware unto me to day, that he
" will not ſlay his Servant with the Sword.
" And *Solomon* ſaid, if he will ſhew himſelf
" a worthy Man, there ſhall not an Hair
" of him fall to the Earth: But if
" Wickedneſs ſhall be found in him, he
" ſhall Die. So King *Solomon* ſent, and they
" brought him down from the Altar, and
" he came and bowed himſelf to King *So-*
" *lomon*; and *Solomon* ſaid unto him, Go
" to thine Houſe.

Sir *Ind.* 'Foregad I was almoſt aſleep with your long Scripture Story. But pray now to what purpoſe is it? What Uſe do you make of it?

*True.* 'Tis true, I might have given you the Story in fewer Words; but I thought that the noble ſimplicity of the Narration wou'd pleaſe you, without any Conſideration of its being Scripture. The Reaſon of my telling it was to ſhow, that here is

the ſame Revolution effected, without any Villainous Characters, of which the *Step-mother* is full; and it wou'd ſurprize one, that a Gentleman ſhou'd take his Fable from it, and Clog it with ſo many Abſurdities, from which the Original Fact is entirely free.

*Free.* Nay, the Original Story wou'd have furniſh'd nobler Occaſions, for the Paſſions, Deſcriptions, Topics, Reflections, and Sentences; tho' I am by no means of Opinion, that the Story, as it lies in the firſt of *Kings*, is at all Dramatic; yet, ſince he has Tranſlated the Scene from *Jeruſalem* to *Perſopolis*, he was ſo far Maſter of his Fable, as to make it truly Tragical; but if that cou'd not be effected, it was not his Buſineſs to have meddl'd with it at all.

*True.* He has one (among many) very odd Expreſſions, *When* Heroes *knock their knotty Heads together*; I can't imagine why a Hero's Head ſhou'd be eſſentially Knotty; the Heroes of Antiquity were not ſo, neither the *Achilles* of *Homer*, nor the *Æneas* of *Virgil*, nor any of the Dramatic Heroes of *Sophocles* or *Euripides*, had any ſuch Characters in thoſe great and admirable Poets. *Thoſe open and unſuſpecting Fools*, *Mirza* ſays of *Memnon*, tho' the Poet afterwards ſhews him ſo ſuſpicious of the Prieſt *Magas*, nay even of *Cleone*, that he cou'd give no Cauſe for this Imputation. *Free.*

*Free.* *Mirza* is indeed a Perſon of a peculiar Taſte; for a Cunning Man to own himſelf a Rogue to the Man he ſhou'd keep in Ignorance, and whom he was to work to his ends, argues little pretence to that Name; but he laughs at *Honeſty*, and profeſſes himſelf a Knave to one he wou'd have Honeſt to him.

*True.* *Rochfacaut* was a Man profoundly Skill'd in Human Nature, and he ſays, a Knave has not Matter enough to make an Honeſt Man of. But Mr. *Bays* ſuppoſes Nature more put to it to make a Rogue, or what is all one, will have it, That Greater Parts and Underſtanding are neceſſary to compoſe a Villain than an Honeſt Man, and that he that thinks muſt be a Knave.

*Free.* Nay, he ſeems very fond of Rogues, ſince he has, without any Occaſion, made his Prieſt ſo too, Sanctifying his Diſſembling with his Function. But the Stateſmen, Prieſts and Courtiers, are ſure of his Good Word, they are all of a Batch, *The Devil a Barrel the better Herring.*

*True.* The Queen's firſt Speech is Monſtrous, out of Nature, out of Character, fond of her Adultery in a long calm Sililoquy; nor do we know why ſhe comes in, or why ſhe goes out; But that is a common Fault of our Modern *Playwrights*, eſpecially of Mr. *Bays* the Younger.

*Free.* The concluding Lines of the firſt Act are extremely Boyiſh, when he tells his Miſtreſs, That the Sun ſhou'd think her Eyes ſhou'd light the World in his Abſence.

*True.* In the ſecond Act, he talks of *Memnon*'s having recourſe to Arms, of which Power we have not the leaſt Word in the firſt: All that we know is, that he returns from Baniſhment on a day of Jubilee, when all was Safe and Free. The Queen and *Artaxerxes* call Names very handſomly in the ſecond Act, which is extremely agreeable to their high Station.

*Free.* *Artaxerxes* in the third Act, gives a very merry Solution to the Fears of *Ameſtris*, and tells her, that if ſhe fears Parting, why let them take a Touch together preſently; but ſhe is indeed very whymſical to fear the future Falſhood of *Artaxerxes*, when he ſhall be cloy'd with Fruition. But he ſwares he will Feague her off for it, and that, when a Bed ſhe ſhall give him Satisfaction.

*True.* Right —— and ſhe is touch'd with this to the quick; for ſhe tells him, asking Pardon of her Modeſty, that ſhe is ready, ay marry is the Buxom Jade, ready to diſſolve, where ſhe ſtands, with Pleaſure. Oh the Luſcious Rogue *Bays*.

*Free.*

*Free.* A noble Author to be encourag'd by the Ladies of Honour and Chaſtity. I can't yet have done with *Mirza*'s Amour, he is a pleaſant old Wag to attack a young Lady, who thinks that he has juſt Murder'd her Father and Husband as we have already obſerv'd; but he is but a ſilly ſcurvy Politician, to think to win her by Words under this Prejudice, and not ſay, Madam, I have not kill'd your Father nor Husband, they are both Alive and Well, and ſo may continue if you will ſave their Lives by yielding to me; if you will not, I will force you by the help of my Slaves, and then kill both you and one of them, and ſwear *Artaxerxes* did it, on finding you Naught with him; this Stratagem won *Lucretia* to ſuffer *Tarquin*. If ſhe had withſtood this Trial, the Stateſman had not appear'd ſo great a Coxcomb, as the Poet has now made him.

*True.* The very Scene of his ſtruggling with her is Comedy, 'tis like *Volpone* in the Fox, with the Wife of *Corvino*; it has nothing Tragical, but he ſeems fond of theſe Fantaſtic Scenes, he has repeated this in his *Jane Shore* betwixt her and *Haſtings*, tho' at beſt it gives an ugly Image, not fit for the ſight of Women of any tolerable Virtue.

*Free.* The Death of *Cleone*, is the only Scene that moves any thing but Laughter in the whole Play; and yet there is no manner of Reaſon, why ſhe ſhou'd be ſo Unhappy; it is contrary to Poetic Juſtice, and the Rules of Providence, nor of any manner of Uſe to the Plot or Cataſtrophe. But *Cleone*, indeed, might have been left entirely out, without any Injury to the Fable, I mean what we muſt here call the Fable.

*True.* There is as little Reaſon, that *Ameſtris* or *Artaxerxes*, ſhou'd Die, both Sovereignly Virtuous, and yet Miſerable.

*Free.* There is indeed nothing Tragical in this Play. The Puniſhments of *Mirza* and *Magas* give Satisfaction; The Deaths of *Cleone*, *Ameſtris* and *Artaxerxes*, provoke our Indignation, as having done nothing at all to deſerve thoſe Incredible Misfortunes; ſo that inſtead of *Fear* and *Pity*, the true aim of all Tragical Action, it moves only Horror and Satisfaction; and indeed every where endeavours to aboliſh the Notion of particular Providence, and ſo is Impious. As for *Memnon*, I know not what he has to do in the Play at all; and as for his Death, it might have ſeem'd a little qualified by the Murder of *Cleander*, had he not clear'd himſelf, and prov'd, that he kill'd him in his own Defence:

fence: Beſides, this Fact was not in the Play, nor had any Relation to the Action. The Queen, the Cauſe of all the Miſchief, is ſafe in the Guardianſhip of a Dutiful Son.

*True.* All the Unfortunate Characters are good, and the moſt Fortunate the worſt of the bad, as for *Artaban*, he is for having the Crown that is not his due; but he is for Fighting for it, he wou'd take it by Force, not Fraud. He differs from his Mother, *Mirza*, *&c.* as a *Highwayman* does from a *Pickpocket*, both are Felons; *Artaban* is the *Highwayman*, and *Artemiſa* the *Pickpocket*.

*Free.* In ſhort, this Murdering ſo many, ſhows the Weakneſs of the Poet's Genius; the Dagger being at hand to help out every Bungler. And it farther juſtifies the Reproach thrown on our Country by *Rapin* and ſome others, That we *Inſularies* are delighted with Blood in our Sports, and to our Shame, our Tragic Poets every day confirm it; but none more, than your worthy Friend Mr. *Bays*.

Sir *Ind.* Well, I hope we may have a little Ceſſation now, and ſend a Glaſs about to Good Nature, for you have been ſufficiently ſevere on this Piece of Honeſt *Bays*.

*Free.* I hope with Truth and Juſtice — for where we have ſaid one thing, the Play, under Conſideration, afforded Matter

for Twenty; but to avoid Tediouſneſs, we have but touch'd upon it. We have ſaid nothing of his Language ———

Sir *Ind.* Nay, ſure you'll allow him that? for that Quality alone ſupports his Credit with the Town.

*Free.* I muſt needs ſay that I do not like his Language —— he is every where *Loquax*, but no where *Facundus*.

Sir *Ind.* Well, *Jo. Freeman*, here's Mr. *Bays*'s Health.

*Free.* With all my Heart, may his better Stars provide for him ſo well, that he may not be under any neceſſity of expoſing his own want of Underſtanding in the Art he pretends to; nor the Town for being ſo often bit with his Commodities. I have no Hatred to the Man, I only am an Enemy to his Poetic Capacity, and I may ſay to him, what *Martial* ſaid to *Cerdo*:

*Iraſci noſtro non debes Cerdo Libello*
*Ars tua non Vita eſt Carmine læſa meo.* Mart.

*True.* Well, Sir *Indolent*, we will not be ſo long on any of his other Plays; but this being his firſt, and that, on which he built all his after Authority, we cou d not ſay leſs than we have, in Juſtice to the Art. Come, Sir *Indolent*, here is Mr. *Bays*'s Health and Proſperity.

Sawny

Sawny Dapper *opens the Door and comes in without any Ceremony.*

*Dap.* Ha! my dear Sir *Indolent*, yours; ha! my good Friend *Jo. Freeman* yours; and you, Sir, I am your moſt Humble Obſequious Servant: What Wine are you Drinking? *French* I hope, or I can't Taſte one Drop; I hope the *Bill of Commerce* will paſs, that we may have it Cheaper---I am indeed an Enemy to the *Portugal* Trade, merely becauſe I don't like their Wines.

*The End of the firſt Act.*

ACT

# ACT. II.

*SCENE the ſame Room.*

Sir *Indolent Eaſy*, *Joſeph Freeman*, *Dick True-wit*, and *Sawny Dapper*.

*Dap.* WELL, I proteſt, I think 'tis a Glaſs of excellent Wine. Well, and how and how, and what were you upon my dear Knight? on *Wit*, *Politics*, or *Religion?*

Sir *Ind.* Oh! for *Politics* and *Religion*, I leave them to the Stateſmen and the Clergy; for they thrive ſo ill in their Hands, that I am affraid they wou'd be quite loſt in ours.

*Dap.* I proteſt Pithy and Satiric enough Sir *Indolent*; well, then I find you have been upon *Wit*, as indeed what cou'd you have been on within the Air of *Covent-Garden*, beſides *Wit?*

*Free.* But Mr. *Dapper* we were upon *Poetry*.

*Dap.* Better ſtill, I love *Poetry* with all my Heart. Why, Sir, I am a ſmall Dabler in *Helicon* my ſelf. [*To* True-wit.]

*True.* Doubtleſs, Sir, a great Proficient in the Art.

*Dap.*

*Dap.* Why faith I think ſo; yet I believe I may ſay, thanks to my own Induſtry, and my good Friends Applauſe, that I am got into the Front part of the Sons of *Parnaſſus*, and therefore I am ſorry I miſt your Diſcouſe of *Poetry*.

*Free.* But dear *Sawny*, it was Criticizing upon *Poetry*, which you, Gentlemen, that now entertain the Town in that way, are mortal Enemies to.

*Dap.* I muſt needs ſay that, if I had not written on *Criticiſm* my ſelf I ſhou'd not ſay much in its Praiſe; but I thought to do in my Progreſs to Poetry, as Mr. *Bays* the Elder did with his Prologues. I appear'd firſt in the Character of a *Critic in Terrorem* to the Reigning Wits of the Time, that they ſhou'd the more eaſily admit me into their Number: But then for their Encouragement, I writ in Rhime, and faith, to ſay Truth, as to Matter, not ſo far above them, as to make them fear that I ſhou'd not fall down to their Level.

*True.* I find, Sir, then, that there is a great deal of Art, as well as good Fortune, in attaining to the Honour of a *Wit*, or Poetic Author.

*Dap.* Oh! Sir, the greateſt Art in the World; for, Sir, if you truſt to mere Merit, you'll never be taken Notice of by the Town.

*True.*

*True.* I find then, Sir, that Merit is no more the way to Preferment in the Preſent State of *Parnaſſus*, than at Court; Intereſt with the Powerful, in both, ſupplies all manner of Defects.

*Dap.* True, Sir, pray to confirm this, give me leave to tell you how I came to this Authority which I now profeſs.

*True.* Strangely Ridiculous [*Aſide*] —— By all means, Sir, pray proceed, you will infinitely oblige me, and I believe, *Freeman*, and Sir *Indolent*; I am a Country Gentleman, and it will be all Novelty to me.

*Dap.* Novelty, Sir; why then, Sir, it is *Wit*, and therefore muſt pleaſe every polite Perſon. *Novelty*, Sir, is *Wit*; for *Wit* at beſt without *Novelty*, will ſignify nothing in this Town.

Sir *Ind.* Prithee *Sawny* how does *Ned Doggrel* and Dr. *Scandal* do? 'Foregad they are very Facetious, Pretty Fellows; nay, the Doctor is a good *Scholar*. Prithee *Sawny* bring them to dine with me ſome day.

*Dap. Ned Doggrel* and Dr. *Scandal!* Why Sir *Indolent*, I wou'd have you to know I keep no ſuch Company; the mere *Canaille* of Writers, who never were at *Button*'s or *Will*'s, or kept Company with a Gentleman of the *Covent-Garden* Air.

*Free.*

*Free. Aside to* True-wit. { Sir *Indolent* has ingeniously diverted the Fool from exposing himself, and he is not sensible of the Design.

Sir *Ind.* 'Foregad *Sawny*, I think they write very pretty Verses, as good as any of our present Authors, I mean in their way *Sawny*.

*Dap.* Ay, they may write, and write their Eyes out, before they arrive to my Reputation or my Conversation; they have not the Address of raising themselves by Art.

*Free.* Faith *Sawny*, I wou'd have thee set up to teach the Art of raising a Name by Poetry, without any.

*Dap.* As much a Jest as you mean that now *Jo*, it is in Fact, and I know not but it might be a good Project, and what I wou'd undertake, did not the Greek Poets lie on my hands now for a Translation.

Sir *Ind.* 'Foregad *Sawny*, I did not know that you understood *Greek*; nay, I must needs say, thou art a pretty Industrious Young Fellow.

*Dap.* Why, Sir *Indolent*, if I did not understand *Greek*, what of that; I hope a Man may Translate a *Greek* Author without understanding *Greek*; What d'ye think of *Josephus*, *Polybius*, and many more, whose Translators never cou'd read *Greek*? Ah!

Sir

Sir *Indolent*, you don't know half the Arts of getting a Reputation in this Town for *Learning* and *Poetry*.

*Free*. I find you are an Experienc'd Man this way Mr. *Dapper*, pray proceed in your Account, it muſt be ſurprizing.

*Dap*. Why, Sir, you muſt know for getting a Reputation for *Poetry*, there are ſome Qualifications abſolutely neceſſary, as a happy knack at Rhime, and a flowing Verſification; but that is ſo common now that very few do want it; then you muſt chuſe ſome odd out of the way Subject, ſome Trifle or other that wou'd ſurprize the Common Reader that any thing cou'd be written upon it, as a *Fan*, a *Lock of Hair*, or the like.

*True*. As the *Lutrin* of *Boileau*, or the *Diſpenſary* of Dr. *Garth* I ſuppoſe.

*Dap*. Ah, Sir, that won't do; *Boileau* and *Garth* have treated of little things with Magnificence of Verſe, as *Homer* did of the Frogs; but that is now Old, we muſt have ſomething New; Heroic Doggrel is but lately found out, where the Verſe and the Subject agree, as,

*——— My Lord, why what the Devil?*
*Zounds, Damn the Lock, 'foregad you muſt be Civil;*
*Plague on't 'tis paſt a Jeſt; nay prithee, Pox*
*Give her the Hair* ——— If

If a Man wou'd diſtinguiſh himſelf, it muſt be by ſomething New and Particular. *Boileau* and *Garth* had arriv'd to ſo much Fame and Reputation in the former way, that there was no coming after them in the ſame Track; we therefore found out the *Heroic-Comical* way of Writing, that no Man ever thought of before.

*True.* That I dare ſwear. True, we have heard of *Tragi-Comical*, a very prepoſterous and unnatural Mixture, and now I think pretty well exploded; but for this *Heroic-Comical*, I confeſs it is new and more odd than the other.

*Dap.* Ay, Sir, and that makes it do. But, Sir, that is not enough, beſides the newneſs of the Verſe, you muſt have a new manner of Addreſs; you muſt make the Ladies ſpeak Bawdy, no matter whether they are Women of Honour or not; and then you muſt dedicate your Poem to the Ladies themſelves. Thus a Friend of mine has lately, with admirable Addreſs, made *Arabella F —— m —— r* prefer the Locks of her Poll, to her Locks of another more ſacred and ſecret Part.

*Oh! hadſt thou Cruel! been content to ſeize*
*Hairs leſs in Sight*— or any Hairs *but theſe.*

But

But this is likewiſe a Complement to thoſe Parts of the Lady, to let the World know that the Lady had *Hairs* elſewhere, which ſhe valu'd leſs.

*Nor fear'd the chief th' unequal Fight to try,*
*Who ſought no more than on his Foe to Die.*

Admirable Good again, you know what Dying is on a fair Lady Sir *Indolent*, prettily expreſs'd, I vow, *than on his Foe to Die.* But then, Sir, the *Machinary* of this Poem is admirably contriv'd to convey a luſcious Hint to the Ladies, by letting them know, that their Nocturnal Pollutions are a Reward of their Chaſtity, and that when they Dream of the Raptures of Love, they are immortalizing a *Silph* as that Ingenious and Facetious Author ſweetly intimates in his Epiſtle Dedicatory, as the Book of the *Count de Gabalis* recommended explains it.

*True.* I have ſeen that moſt Ingenious Piece, in which I find ſomewhat extraordinary in the Contrivance of the Author. He Publiſh'd his Poem firſt without his *Machinary*, and afterwards with it, this is an extraordinary Method indeed. Now the Poets of Antiquity, founded their Poems on their Machinary; but I find it is the new way of Writing to invent the Machinary, after the Poem is not only Written but Publiſh'd.

*Dap.*

*Dap.* Alack a day, Sir, I find you are a perfect Country Gentleman indeed, to think that we new Authors care one Farthing for what the old Authors did; no, no, Sir, we know better things, we know how to purchaſe Fame cheaper.

*Free.* Why prithee *Dick*, every Age improves, why elſe does the World grow Older?

*Dap.* Improve, ay marry does it, nor ever were the Arts of getting a Name arriv'd to greater Perfection; why, Sir, I was fain to write a Copy of Verſes in my own Praiſe, for none knew my Merit better than my ſelf; then I put the Name of a Celebrated Old Author to it, but the Devil of it was, tho' that Author was of an Eſtabliſh'd Reputation for *Wit*, yet he was remarkable for an ill Verſification, ſo that my Stile diſcover'd me; and indeed, when I heard them prais'd, I cou'd not help owning to my Friends, that I writ them my ſelf.

*True.* Why, faith Mr. *Dapper*, that's a new way indeed, and not very difficult; a Man might ſoon get Fame, if writing a Copy of Verſes in his own Praiſe wou'd do it.

*Dap.* Phoo, Sir, that was but one ſtep in my Advancement. You muſt know that there are two Parties of WITS, and two or three Men at the Head of them. Now I

firſt

firſt fixt my ſelf on the good Nature and eaſy Temper (by my Application) of the Men of real Merit; they cry'd me up, recommended me to the Town, and the Town took their Words, and ſo I ſet up for my ſelf; for you muſt know, they can't ſo eaſily deſtroy a Man's Reputation, as make it; then I gave my Approbation of the Works of the Heads of the other Party; that is of thoſe who have Vogue and no Merit; by this means I gain'd all their Friends, and bring thoſe I approve, to a ſort of Dependance upon me.

*True.* I proteſt, Sir, you are a great Politician, I know not but you may make a Miniſter of State in time, if ever the Pretender ſhou'd come, by your Candour and Penetration.

*Dap.* Whoo! Pox you don't know me yet. Why t'other day I was deſir'd to read over *Jane Shore*, and what do you think I writ upon it when I had done?

*True.* Faith I can't tell —— unleſs that it was the moſt Stupid Piece that ever was Written.

*Dap.* Oh! gad, Sir, directly the contrary —— I writ down on the Copy, *This is the beſt Play that has been Written ſince* Euripides.

*Free.* Did you believe what you writ?

*Dap.* Egad, I can't ſay that in ſtrict Truth I did, tho' *Conſideratis Conſiderandis*,

I don't know but there might be ſomething in it; but be that as it will I had my end in it, I complemented the Author, and his Vanity receiv'd it as Sterling Praiſe, without the leaſt Allay of Flattery; beſides, if it had been exactly true, I had not done it, for then it had been my Buſineſs to have cry'd it down; but the leſs real Merit it had, the more ſervice I did him, and ſo the better maintain'd my Authority in the Diſpoſal of Fame.

*True.* Is this one of our Modern Methods too?

*Dap.* Oh yes, Sir, ever while you live, the leſs Merit an Author has that applies for our Commendation, the more we think our ſelves oblig'd to cry him up; for that multiplies the Votes againſt the *Critics*, who wou'd tear us all to Pieces if they cou'd. But telling Noſes is now the Standard of Wit, and the moſt Voices carry it, as in the Members of Parliament. Not but that we have ſometimes our Committees of Election too, that can make Three a greater number than Thirteen; that is when our Occaſions require it.

*True.* But *Sawny*, thou cou'dſt never have pick'd out ſuch another Poet as *Euripides*, to mention with the Author of *Jane Shore*; the firſt is a Maſter of the Fable, Manners, Sentiments and Diction; we ſee Nature

and

and Art go Hand in Hand thro' all he Writes; neither of which were ever the leaſt known to the latter.

*Dap.* Whoo! a mere Baggatelle with us, Sir. But Sir *Indolent* is faſt aſleep —— Sir *Indolent*, Sir *Indolent*, come, here's a Health to the Lock leaſt in ſight.

Sir *Ind.* 'Foregad *Sawny* thou haſt talk'd me aſleep ——— But come the 'foreſaid Health, and the bright Poets that ſung it.

*Dap.* Egad, he is a bright young Fellow; you ſhall ſee a Play of his next Winter, that will Pit, Box, and Gallery it with a Witneſs. You muſt know, Sir, that the Name of *Jane* is now grown very Dramatic, and he's Writing a Play of the Lady *Jane Grey*. The Proteſtant Poet writes a Play on a Popiſh Whore, and the Popiſh Poet is to write one on the Proteſtant Queen.

Sir *Ind.* Of the Proteſtant Pretender you mean *Sawny*; but I ſuppoſe he concludes in Sacrificing her to the Popiſh Queen.

*Dap.* Nay, I heard a Bird ſing, that Mr. *Bays* himſelf, wou'd give him a lifting hand, or at leaſt a Commendatory Copy of Verſes.

*True.* I wou'd have you adviſe your Friend to conſider, the Writing of a Play is not like Writing a Paſtoral, or a looſe Copy of Verſes.

*But*

*But to write Plays; why 'tis a bold Pretence,*
*To Judgment, Breeding, Wit and Eloquence.*

And as for Mr. *Bays*, he does not know ſo much as what a Tragedy is.

*Dap.* Oh Lord! Sir, not Mr. *Bays* know what a Tragedy is, why, Sir, he has written five or ſix.

*True.* He has indeed written ſo many Things that he calls Tragedies, but not one true Poem of that ſort. You remember, Sir *Indolent*, that we have ſhown the *Stepmother* to have no one Quality of a *Tragedy*, give us leave to run over the reſt, and prove our Aſſertion.

Sir *Ind.* 'Foregad, Gentlemen, I had rather talk of Politicks or Religion, than hear an Honeſt Gentleman's Succeſsful Works thus taken to Pieces.

*Free.* Nay, Sir *Indolent*, you are in now, and muſt go thro' with the Operation, interrupted by the coming in of your Friend Mr. *Dapper*.

Sir *Ind.* Well, Gentlemen, you have me in your Power; but I beg you wou'd uſe me mercifully. *Sawny*, 'foregad give me ſome Snuff.

*Free.* The *Ambitious Stepmother* firſt got Mr. *Bays* a Name, and *Tamerlane* fixt his Reputation; we have ſeen what the former

was,

was, let us now consider the latter. I remember that his Prologue takes care to inform us, that as *Virgil* sung *Æneas*, so he designs to sing *Tamerlane*, *tho' of much unequal Fame.*

*True.* That is, he writing a Dramatic Poem, imitates *Virgil* who writ an Epic one, extremely Judicious I profess. Now I have been such a Sot to imagine, that there was a very material difference between the *Epic* and *Dramatic* Poems. *Aristotle* and all the Critics had misled me, but Mr. *Bays* has rectified my Judgment.

*Free.* In this indeed, Mr. *Bays*, has a great Number of our Moderns, who have sinn'd with him. For it is but an Error too common in our Modern Tragic Poets, to propose some one great Character or Hero of the Poem, to Celebrate and Aggrandize above Humanity. On the contrary, the Antients propos'd a Moral, and regarded the chief Character or Hero, no farther than the giving such Qualities and Frailties to him, as were necessary to produce that *Moral.* This Conduct was of some Use and Instruction. Our Poets only raise a great and accomplish'd Character beyond Imitation, and to a degree more than Romantic; quite out of the way of practice of the World. But the Ancient Dramatic Poets exhibited this useful Lesson, — That by

by a too criminal and weak Compliance with the Impulſe of violent Paſſions, we become unhappy, and that therefore we ought to have a watchful guard over our Paſſions in their Riſe, that they may not by their Power in their full growth, make us their Slaves and Miſerable. This is an End an Aim that reaches all Mankind; but the Modern Practice of little or no Uſe, or Concern at all. And indeed, this makes *Tragedy* the Imitation of a Man, which is eſtabliſh'd by the Founders of the Art, as an Imitation of an Action that is Great and Grave, and ſo loſes the moſt Important Conſideration in a Trifle.

Sir *Ind.* I do allow your Reaſon juſt *Jo. Freeman*, and I do likewiſe allow that *Tamerlane* is of this number; yet 'foregad it was written with an Honeſt and True *Engliſh* Deſign, I mean, to pay a grateful Complement to K. *William*, who, I muſt ſtill think, deſerv'd the Gratitude of every *Engliſhman*, Poet, Divine, Tradeſman, Gentleman and Vulgar; for every Degree receiv'd a Benefit from his coming into *England*; tho' 'foregad, I think the Divines, who were the moſt immediately oblig'd to him, are the moſt averſe to his Memory, I mean for the Generality, who ridicule the Revolution; tho' had it not been for the Revolution, they had had no Livings at all before

this Time, unleſs they had qualified themſelves by quitting their Wives, and taking the Mark of the Scarlet Whore on their Foreheads.

*Free.* Why, Sir *Indolent*, you are warm, I thought nothing cou'd have ruffled your even Temper; I am glad to find you a Man, and that you have Paſſions, but they can never be more juſtifiable than on ſuch an Occaſion.

*True.* Sir *Indolent*, I am ſenſible that the Notion that this Play was a Complement to the King, did the Poet's Buſineſs; but I am as ſure, that King *William* deſerv'd a much more Noble and Heroic Character than is given here to *Tamerlane*; he appears like a General and a King, but acts like a Country School-maſter, or at moſt as an *Epictetus*, a mere Speculative Philoſopher.

*Dap.* 'Egad, what Company am I faln into? *Critics*, mere *Critics*, that are for Rules, and Reaſons, and Art, and the Lord knows what, which we have nothing to do with; at this rate, I ſhall not be allow'd a Poet my ſelf. 'Egad I'll ſteal off, and fetch Mr. *Bays* from the Houſe, to plead his own Cauſe. [*Aſide.*

[Dapper *ſteals away.*

*Free.* Nay, 'tis very Obſervable, that the Part of *Tamerlane* may be taken out, and the

the Play remain as good as with it. He is indeed, as one has ſaid, a ſauntring talking Hero, that does nothing, and is nothing.

*True.* As for that, you may take away *Moneſes* and *Arpaſia* too, and never make the Play worſe than it is, but better; for here are two very Unfortunate Characters, that do by no means deſerve to be ſo, as being entirely Innocent, perfectly Virtuous.

*Free.* *Bajazet* is all along a ſort of a Mad Man, and ſeems to have been brought up at *Billinſgate*, for the *Dogs*, and the like Names which he calls all about him. There is a Play written on this Subject by one Mr. *Saunders*, a young Gentleman about Nineteen, before which is a Prologue by Mr. *Dryden*, which is infinitely more in Nature, and more Pathetic; there the Scene between *Bajazet* and *Tamerlane* comes more within the compaſs of Humane Nature. But as this is the worſt of all thoſe which have been written on this *Tartar* Conqueror, ſo has it been the moſt Succeſsful.

*True.* But Sir *Indolent*, the Complements paid by Tragedy have been in another manner among the Antients, not in the Character of the Hero, as in the *Oedipus Coloneus* of *Sophocles*, and the *Ion* of *Euripides*, without deſtroying the Nature of the Drama.

*True.* Then what an impoſſible Incident is that Conſpiracy of *Omar* and the *Deroiſe* in the midſt of a Camp, and in the Priſoners Apartment, where even the General of *Tamerlane*'s Army is ſav'd from Death, only by eſcaping in a Diſguiſe.

*Free.* I appeal to you Sir *Indolent*, is there any one Scene, any one Speech, any one Line, that moves you thro' the whole Play? and here, as well as in the former of the *Stepmother*, neither Pity nor Fear are touch'd. We are ſatisfied with the Puniſhment of the Offenders, and angry at the Sufferings of *Moneſes* and *Arpaſia*, that is, ſuppoſing that we are at all inveſted in any of the Events; for I confeſs I am not, for what is out of Nature, never touches me at all.

Sir *Ind.* Nay, for my part, I am no Judge of theſe Affairs, I go no further than the Diction, and that I think the Poet has perform'd to a Miracle.

*Free.* I am ſorry, Sir *Indolent*, that I cannot go ſo far as you, ev'n in that; the Author has endeavour'd to imitate *Milton*'s ſtile in his *Paradice Loſt*, which is admirable in the *Epic*, but not at all agreeable to the *Dramatic* Poem: And therefore *Milton* himſelf Writes quite in another Manner in his *Sampſon Agoniſtes*.

Sir *Ind.* Well, 'foregad Gentlemen, I wiſh you had done this ill-natur'd Work; for I'm

I'm quite tir'd with it, 'tis quite out of my way: I am not Supervisor of the Stage, and therefore the convincing me will be of no manner of Benefit to the *Drama*. If I can serve any Gentleman, that is so unfortunate to Write, I will.

*True*. But, Sir, it is to bring you to Justice to those very few that have or may Write well; that you may not favour Pretenders, who gather Assurance from your Smiles, because they know you to be a Man of establish'd Merit.

*Free*. Well, Sir *Indolent*, to please you we will say no more of *Tamerlane*, even for the lame Complement intended by it to our glorious Monarch: Tho' it wou'd be a very easy matter to prove, that there scarce ever was a worse Play, except the *Royal Convert* of the same Author.

*True*. Nay, now I must joyn with Sir *Indolent*, to desire you to pass that over, with the *Biter*; for I do not remember so much as one Scene through the whole.

*Free*. I do confess these Plays are below Criticism, they are fenc'd round with Stupidity, and dispence such a Dullness all around, that it wou'd be impossible to go through with them and keep awake.

*True*. The only Criticism they deserve, is a Spunge dipt in Ink.

*Free.* Well, Sir *Indolent*, giving but a Word or two on *Ulyſſes*, and the *Fair Penitent*, we will, with as few on *Jane Shore*, diſmiſs you in Peace.

*True.* I ſhall be the more tender of *Ulyſſes*, becauſe it is by much the beſt of his, and has a ſort of a Face of Tragedy. The Poet indeed has left it without any Moral; he has made *Semanthe* unfortunate without any demerit. He has taken all *Ithaca* for his Scene, which, by as good a Reaſon, might have been extended to all *Greece*, and ſo to all *Europe*, nay, indeed, to the whole Earth. He has introduc'd I know not how many Kings with the Manners of Scoundrels or Porters; he has been fond, admiring *Penelope*'s Beauty at Forty odd. He has made *Ulyſſes* put *Penelope* to an unneceſſary and unjuſt Tryal, not at all conducive to the Plot, nor agreeable to the Wiſdom, or Gratitude of his Hero. But theſe, and a great many more Abſurdities of the Deſign, Conduct, and indeed of the Sentiments and Diction, I will ſacrifice to your good Nature; and to the weak Appearance of a Tragedy, which he has in no other of his Performances.

Sir *Ind.* They ſay 'tis an eaſie thing to find fault; 'foregad I think it is the hardeſt thing in Nature; I am ſure I ſhould have read and ſeen *Ulyſſes*, an hundred Times, before

I cou'd have diſcover'd the third part of the Faults you have produc'd; and yet you wou'd perſuade me that you are ſilent as to the Reſt, in Complaiſance to me, and the uncommon Merit of the Play.

*True.* Why, Sir *Indolent*, to ſatisfy you that I had made a Conſiderable Sacrifice to you in this, I will give you the Faults of *Ulyſſes* more at length; nor abridge you of their Number.

Sir *Ind.* Nay, Sir, 'foregad I'd rather thank you for your Complement, than ſtand the Tryal of the Reality. I pray proceed.

*Free.* The *FAIR PENITENT* was built on a much better Play of *Maſſinger*'s, call'd the *Fatal Dowry*. The Poets are equally guilty of making their Heroine a *Whore*; but the latter Poet has made her more unpardonable and obſtinate, and ſtill leſs worthy of Pity. *Charolois* in *Maſſinger* reſents the Incontinence and Injury to his Bed like a Man of Honour; yet will not puniſh her till her Father had heard the Cauſe, and decided it againſt her; and when the Father's Juſtice had Condemn'd her, the Husband ſtrikes the Dagger into her Boſome: This makes Nature return to her Father, and his Grief for the untimely loſs of his only Child, produces a very noble, and natural Scene. But in Mr. *Bays*, the Husband is a true tame Cuckold, tho'

an *Italian*, and is for forgetting all that's paſt. But the Father is implacable, and will admit of no Compenſation; in ſpight of all the Pleas of Nature, and even the Husband's Indolence in deſiring to ſit down contented with her as ſhe is: If ſhe had been a Maid it had been better; but ſince it was, as 'twas, why good Man he wou'd take up with her as he had, *for better or for worſe.*

*True.* To ſay no more of this *Italian* *NIKY*, we will only read you a Prologue deſign'd for this Play, by a Gentleman, who by writing it only on an hearſay Account of the Tragedy, was miſtaken in two or three things, but ſuch as common ſenſe wou'd excuſe him in. As that the Husband ſtab'd her, as who cou'd have expected leſs from an *Italian Cornudo?*

*A Prologue ſent to Mr.* Bays, *to his new Play call'd the* Fair Penitent; *deſign'd to be ſpoken by Mr.* Betterton, *but refus'd.*

Eſt & in obſcenos deflexa Tragedia Riſus.

QUacks *ſet out Bills*, Jack-Pudding *makes* (*Harangues*,
*And Thief at* Tiburn *ſpeaks before he hangs.*
*I pray you then give Ear to what I ſay,*
*For this to me is* Execution Day.

*The*

*The Stage is* Tiburn; *Boxes, Gallery, Pit,*
*Where you our Judges, and our Hangmen ſit,*
*Of Nonſenſe tender, but ſevere to Wit.*
*To Day we fear you not, we've hit your Taſte,*
*And when that's pleas'd we cannot ſure be Caſt.*
*Meanly contented with the vulgar Way,*
*Some make the Heroine Virtuous in a Play:*
*But the bold* Tragic Genius *of our Stage,*
*With Novelty reſolves t'oblige the Age,*
*And with an* Heroine PUNK, *the Ladies*
*(will engage.*
*He from the* SOC *the Proſtitute tranſplants,*
*And ſwells the humble* WHORE *with buskin'd*
*(Rants.*
*His Whore indeed repents the ſlippery Fault,*
*But, like the Reſt, it is not till ſhe is caught.*
*She is not ſorry that ſhe has play'd the* Whore,
*But that, diſcover'd, ſhe can do't no more.*
*Thus while his* PUNK *in Buskins boldly ramps,*
*Like* * Bajazet, *his* HERO CUCKOLD *ſtares*
*(and ſtamps.*
*He with no Laurel Wreaths his Brow adorns,*
*But while thoſe vulgar Ornaments he ſcorns,*
*Above his Brethren he exalts his Horns.*
*Confederate Cuckolds then come Clap this Play,*
*Our* Lucky *Bard to you devotes this Day.*
*No* Doodle, Daſhwood, Wiſeacre *is here;*
*Nor any of the puny Race, that us'd to appear;*

* This was a miſtake, for the Hero Cuckold is very tame.

*The* CUCKOLD *now assumes an haughtier Air,*
** With Brandish'd Dagger stabs the yielding Fair,*
*So little Womans Frailty is his Care.*
*Ye horned Herd from* Wapping *to* White-Hall,
*Approach in Tryumph, he invites you all;*
*So strong a Party made, he need not fear his Fall.*
*Some envious Critic here perhaps exclaims,*
*If you shou'd punish thus the City Dames;*
*You'd make a Desolation in the Land,*
*And Barrs, and Counters wou'd unfurnish'd stand.*
*But, Ladies, you with Ease, that Fear remove,*
*If you use Caution in the Thefts of Love;*
*Since only she, that's caught, this Punishment will prove.*
*Danger adds Fewel to the amorous Fire,*
*And Difficulties only raise Desire.*
*Besides—past Merits you shou'd not despise,*
*When* † Solomon, *and* ‖ William *in Disguise,*
*From his lov'd Pen regal'd your Ears, and Eyes.*
*What tho' nor* Art, *nor* Nature *there were found;*
*He scorns by* Art *or* Nature *to be bound.*
*Let others toil beneath the Load of Thought,*
*Of what is just, what natural, what not;*

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* Another mistake from the nature of an *Italian* Husband, who was very likely to do so.

† *Artaban.* ‖ *Tamerlane.*

*They're dull mechanick Things below Regard,*
*From such a bold, and such a lucky Bard.*
*Uncumber'd with those Fetters, still he'll write,*
*Whilst* Ignorance *assures his hoodwink'd Flight.*
*He fears no Danger, for he none foresees;*
*In happy* Ignorance *secure to please,*
*Without those forreign Aids, th' indulgent Town,*
*With Heroes and with Language,* All his own.
*The Hooded Falcon so, in haste let fly,*
*Tours swift aloft undaunted to the Sky*
*With upright Wing, till lost to human Eye.*
*From Thrones he* sauntring, talking HE-
(ROES *chose,*
*But for an* active HEROINE *now rakes the*
(*Stews;*
*And whence he'll fetch the next* —— he on-
(ly knows.
*Yet* * CRESSWEL *sure of infamous Renown,*
*Or some more Antique Matron of this Town,*
*May reasonably next invoke his Pen*
*To do her Justice in his* LOFTY SCENE.
*Nor can she sure his* LOFTY SCENE *disgrace*
*Since* BAWD, *in Breeding, still of* WHORE
(*takes Place.*
*For* B A W D's *arriv'd to the* grave Doctor's
(*State,*
*While* WHORE *is but an* Undergraduate.

---

* An Eminent vulgar Bawd, of about Thirty years ago.

BAWDS *maudlin Tone from penitential Cart*
*( Like* Theſpis *founder of the Tragick Art)*
*Muſt have the Force to move each amorous*
*( Heart.*

*But what is it that Poets cannot do?*
*Careſs'd by* US, *and ſo extoll'd by* YOU?
*T'encourage Merit nobly you diſdain,*
*It is* pedantic, *and below your Vein,*
*And faith to tell the Truth, we love our Gain.*
*As with the Saints, ſo 'tis, we find, with you;*
*For here alas! th'* ELECT *are very Few,*
*And thoſe without your Reaſon, by your Will*
*( ſav'd too.*
*The leſs of proper Merit they can boaſt,*
*The more ſecure they are from being loſt.*
*While Farce and Bombaſt beſt can pleaſe the*
*( Age,*
*We'll Cook no other Diſhes for the Stage.*
*When to your Smiles juſt Poets you admit,*
*And flock in ſhoals to Nature and to Wit,*
*All Poetaſters then we will diſcard,*
*And here encourage only the true Bard.*
*For ſure in us it muſt ſeem Impudence*
*To cheriſh Merit, and to play good Senſe,*
*When from* your *Taſte we hope for all our*
*( Pence.*

Sir *Ind.* Malicious enough 'foregad —— but what ſignifies all this, you find the Play pleas'd, and the Satire is forgotten.

*Free.*

*Free.* The Play was forgot till its ſecond Part of *Jane Shore* reviv'd it with a ſecond Edition. But I will ſay no more of this Play, but what may juſtly be ſaid of all thoſe with which this Author has yet viſited the Town —— That Nature, Character, and Deſign, are wholly unknown to him; that a ſort of ſonorous numerous Verſe, very empty of Senſe and Poetry, is what has rais'd him a Name, and that the juſteſt Criticiſm on this and others, wou'd be once more, a Spunge dip'd in Ink.

*Re-enter* Dapper.

*Dap.* Well, Gentlemen, have you yet got over *Criticiſm?* I proteſt 'tis the moſt ungenteel thing in the World, Men of Polite Parts never mind it, or indeed know any thing of it, only Poets who have written without Succeſs, and thoſe who never durſt write at all, make a Pother with it againſt the Taſte of the Town, and the Favours it beſtows on us its brighter Spirits, who know how to pleaſe it.

Sir *Ind.* Dear *Sawny* here's a Bumper, (which I do not uſe to drink) here's Honeſt Mr. *Bays*'s Health, I wiſh he were here to plead his own Cauſe.

*Dap.* I'll pledge you Sir *Indolent*, he's only giving the Players an Account of a new Play that he's about, and he'll kiſs your Hands;

Hands; I told him you were here, and he longs to repeat ſome Lines of his to you, you are a Candid Judge.

*True.* I ſhou'd be glad to ſee the Man; is he made like other Men? For I am ſure he thinks like no Man alive but himſelf.

*Dap.* Ah! Sir, you talk like a Country Gentleman, Sir, the whole Town thinks like him Sir, and all the Wits of the Town Sir that have any Name think like him, Sir,——

*True.* Why faith Mr. *Dapper*, if all the Town thinks like him, it is a very Senſeleſs Town; and your *Wits* ought to be ſent to improve and learn Nature in *Lapland*, for their Songs to their *Rein-deer*, have much more of *Poetry* and *Nature*, than any thing I have ſeen of this great Author's; but here's his Health, Sir.

*Enter Drawer.*

*Draw.* Sir *Indolent Eaſy*, Mr. *Bays* is in a Box below, and deſires to ſpeak a Word or two with you.

Sir *Ind.* Deſire him to walk up.

*Draw.* Sir, he deſires you wou'd ſtep down to him.

Sir *Ind.* Well, I'll wait on him.

[*Exeunt Drawer and Sir* Indolent.

*The End of the Second Act.*

ACT.

# ACT. III.

*Sawny Dapper*, *Freeman*, and *True-wit*.

*Dap.* MR. *Freeman*, I proteſt I have a great eſteem for you, and I wiſh you wou'd abate of that Ill-nature you have ſhown againſt Mr. *Bays*, and the taking Poets; for you muſt know that we all take it for Envy.

*Free.* I am not at all concern'd, what you Gentlemen Writers think of my Good or Ill Nature; but Truth and Art, are what I value before all Men, when they are the Subject of my Diſcourſe, and I ſhall never ſacrifice them to the Succeſs of any Coxcomb in Vogue.

*Dap.* Why, Sir, you may be a *Critic* ſtill, and not diſoblige the Town by condemning what it likes.

*Free.* As how, Mr. *Dapper*?

*Dap.* Why I am a *Critic* my ſelf —— but then I write always in Praiſe of what is cry'd up by the Town; by that I oblige the Authors, and get the Reputation of a well natur'd Fellow, free from Envy, Malice, and the like. Have you not ſeen a *Review of* Jane Shore?

*Free.* Yes marry have I, Sir; but what of that, honeſt well-natur'd *Sawny*?

*Dap.*

*Dap.* Why, I my ſelf writ that gentle Piece of Criticiſm; and I think I have there ſhown, that I underſtand Art as well as the ſevereſt of you all.

*Free.* Did you write that wonderful Piece Mr. *Dapper?* I proteſt I thought that the Bookſeller had written it himſelf.

*Dap.* Oh! no, Sir, the Bookſeller, ha! ha! ha! not but Mr. *Lintot* is a very Ingenious Perſon, and I hope by his Printing Mine and Mr. *Bays*'s Works, to make him a formidable Rival to *Jacob Tonſon*; 'tis true Mr. *Lintot* did give me ſome Hints, but as to the Writing it was all my own.

*Free.* But *Sawny*, how came you, a Scholar, not to know the difference between a *Tragedian* and a *Tragic Poet*, for you call Mr. *Bays* very often a *Tragedian*.

*Dap.* Hum! 'Egad a Tragedian! why a *Tragedian* or *Tragic Poet?* it is all one in the *Greek*.

*True.* No faith, Sir, neither in *Greek* or *Latin*, nor any other Language that I know of.

*Dap.* Phoo! that's but a Trifle, a *lapſus Calami*, a little overſight that we Authors don't much regard; but, Sir, as to the Reaſons, the Arguments, and the Diſcoveries of ſuch Beauties of the Poet, theſe ſhow the Genius of a true Critic, and I hope I have diſcharg'd that part like a Man of Taſte.

*Free.*

*Free.* Why faith *Sawny*, if thou can'ſt hear Truth, I cannot diſcover even that; I mean, I cannot find that thou haſt either defended thy Author like a Man of Art, or diſcover'd one Beauty in him.

*True.* Nay, don't blame Mr. *Dapper*, for the laſt, for he muſt be more than a Critic, that can diſcover Beauties where there are none; and if he has defended him ill, it was becauſe the Author was not capable of a good Defence; it has not been Mr. *Dapper*'s Fault in my Opinion.

*Dap.* 'Egad, Sir, you are a very Civil Perſon, and I am your very Humble Servant —— Faith I ſaid all I cou'd for him, and I hope ſome things that will bear the Teſt.

*Free.* I ſhou'd be glad to hear them honeſt *Sawny* for thy ſake, As how?

*Dap.* Why firſt, I ſhow that the Characters are Tragical, and then that the Play carries a Moral Inſtruction; nay, I do pretend to aſſert, that the Poet's Conduct is of a piece thro' the whole *Drama.*

*True.* In that you are certainly in the Right, for the Poet's Conduct thro' the whole, muſt by all Men, that have ſeen or read the Play, be own'd to be of a piece, that is, every where Faulty; the chief Character, which is *Jane Shore*, is no Tragical Character.

*Dap.*

*Dap.* How, Sir, not Tragical! Why, Sir, the Foundation of many Ancient Tragedies, is plac'd upon Rapes, Murders, Inceſts, Parricides, and ſuch Crimes, which give a ſhocking Idea to the Soul; and their Puniſhment cannot be ſaid to have ſo proper an Influence on the Audience, becauſe the Vices are in themſelves ſo Enormous and Remote from common Practice, that the Moral cannot reach home to the Conſcience of the Hearer.

*Free.* Honeſt *Sawny*, thou art out in every Particular; for there is not one Play of the Antients that is extant, and mention'd in Authors of thoſe Ages, which is built on any ſuch Foundation.

*True.* A Whore profeſs'd, is no Tragic Character, *Incontinency* in Woman being on the ſame Level with *Cowardice* in Man; and Mr. *Bays* might as well have brought a Coward for his Hero, as a Whore for his Heroine.

*Dap.* What do you think of the *Phædra* of the Antients, if ſhe was not an Inceſtuous Whore it was none of her Fault, ſhe was willing tho' *Hyppolitus* was not.

*Free.* That indeed is the moſt queſtionable Character that way among the Antients. Yet is this perfectly clear from being a Whore, and Adultreſs by choice. *Phædra* has all the Reluctance of a Woman of Honour

Honour to the Crime, and ſtruggles with it to the utmoſt, even almoſt to Death; this Criminal Paſſion was a Puniſhment inflicted on her by the Gods. But honeſt *Savvy*, you muſt not take your Notion of *Phædra* from that on our Stage by a late Author, where ſhe is Abandon'd enough indeed, to become almoſt a Parallel to *Jane Shore*; but you muſt look into *Euripides*, and then ſee if there be any thing like it; you will find the Modeſty of the Character nicely preſerv'd, which *Seneca* and Mr. *Smith* have both abominably debas'd.

*True. Jane Shore*, on the contrary is an habitual Whore and Adultreſs, and even in her ſuppos'd Reformatiou, keeps up her Intimacy with *Haſtings*'s Whore Mrs. *Alce*.

*Free. Helen*, is indeed the Heroine of one of the Tragedies of *Euripides*; but this is not the Adulterous *Helen* that was ſeemingly at *Troy*; but the Virtuous and Chaſt *Helen*, who had been all the *Trojan* War in *Pharos*, Mourning the Abſence of her dear Lord and Husband *Menalaus*, and maintaining her Virtue, againſt the Power of King *Theoclymenes*.

*Dap.* But, Gentlemen, may not Circumſtances make a Vicious Character the Object of Pity? As from the Strength of the Temptation, the natural weakneſs of the Offender,

Offender, or the Power and Influence of ſome other Perſon in the Commiſſion of the Crime.

*Free.* No bright Quality can balance a Vice that is Scandalous, as Incontinence in a Woman, and Cowardice in a Man.

*True.* But *Jane Shore*, had ſhe been Innocent of this Crime, had been no Tragic Character, for her Station of Life was too low; a Shop-keepers Wife of the City never can riſe above the Soc; and her having lain with the King and two or three Lords, will never be thought ennobling enough to fit her for the Buskin, ſince that very Crime renders her entirely incapable of it.

*Dap.* But then ſhe is Penitent for this Crime, has a due ſenſe of her Guilt, and ſhows a ſuitable Compunction for her Offence, which makes her the Object of Mercy, that is, Pity.

*True.* Penitence may move our Joy, but can never touch our Compaſſion; and the price of loſt Reputation can never be paid, unleſs that cou'd be reſtor'd, which never was, nor ever can be.

*Dap.* But then ſhe wou'd not yield to *Gloſter*'s Wicked Deſign of putting aſide the Young King.

*Free.* It is not ſufficient to move our Compaſſion, that one that has been Guilty of a Scandalous Vice, will not be Guilty of a more Enormous Wickedneſs. *Dap.*

*Dap.* 'Tis true she is an Adultereſs, but then her fellow offender was a Monarch.

*True.* As for her fellow offender being a Monarch, that takes not away the Scandal of the Fault, but adds the guilt of Ambition to that of Luſt; and here I muſt obſerve, that Mr. *Bays* makes *Jane Shore*'s Virtue produce her Miſery, and not her Vice. Whereas the ancient Tragic Poets made the Hero's Vices produce their Misfortunes. It was the Obſtinacy, Raſhneſs and Curioſity of *Oedipus* that made that diſcovery which render'd him entirely miſerable; but *Jane* is ſo, becauſe ſhe will not add another Wickedneſs to her former.

*Dap.* Well, I do not know what fault you may find with the Character, it is plain the Ladies like poor *Jane* never the worſe for being a Whore, which I think is Defence enough of Mr. *Bays*, againſt all the Malice of his Critics.

*Free.* But honeſt *Sawny*, the Ladies have been us'd of late to ſuch Food, that they have not that Niceneſs it were to be wiſh'd.

*True.* I can't find by the Play that *Jane* is really a Convert, till the Minute that *Gloſter* orders her to be turn'd out to Starve. She is intimate with none but her old Companion in Wickedneſs, who is ſtill Whore to *Haſtings*, who our Caſuiſts wou'd think a very odd Companion for a Penitent; for it

is

is with them a certain ſign that the Repentance is not ſincere and true, when the Penitent is fond of, and does not entirely relinquiſh his Companions in habitual ſins. And indeed *Jane* herſelf remembers her *Paramour* with a very unpenitential Imagery.

*'Tis true the Royal* Edward *was a Wonder,*
*The goodly Pride of all our* Engliſh *Youth;*
*He was the very Joy of all that ſaw him,*
*Form'd to delight, to love, and to perſuade.*
*Impaſſive Spirits, and angelic Natures*
*Might have been Charm'd like yielding hu-*
*( mane Weakneſs,*
*Stoop'd from their Heav'n, and liſten'd to his*
*( talking——*

What cou'd ſhe have ſaid more warmly and more wantonly, had ſhe been juſt yielding to his Luſt? To leſſen her own Frailty, ſhe tells her ſiſter Whore, that *Edward*'s Tongue was enough to corrupt the Angels themſelves to be *Carnaliter'd* by him. A rare Penitent indeed, and much deſerves our Pity.

*Free.* Nay, ſhe ſeems under ſome Concern that her Form is not ſo bright as it was formerly.

*My*

*My Form alas! has long forgot to pleaſe:*
*The Scene of Beauty and Delight is paſt.*

So that poor *Jane* ſtill thinks it Delight to be Wicked ———

*No Roſes bloom upon my fading Cheeks,*
*Nor laughing Graces wanton in my Eyes;*
*But haggard Grief, lean-looking ſallow Care,*
*And piercing Diſcontent, a rueful Train*
*Dwell on my Brow, all hideous and forlorn.*

Is this the Language of a Penitent? As ſuch ſhe ſhou'd rather have deſcrib'd the Beauty of the Mind, the ſatisfaction of a Converted ſtate, and the Charms of a heavenly Spouſe: Whereas all that ſhe ſays, ſeems to place her Pain in that her Pleaſures are paſt Recall.

*True. Jane*'s laſt Speech in the firſt Act is another proof that ſhe repents not her Adultery; for ſhe complains of the hard Fate of Womankind, that they can't Whore with the ſame ſafety to their Reputations, as Mankind can.

*Mark by what partial Juſtice we are Judg'd:*

partial Juſtice, by the way, is an extraordinary Epithet, he might as well have ſaid,

Mark

Mark by what unjuſt Juſtice we are Judg'd; but this is a Pecadillo.

*Such is the Fate* unhappy *Women find*;
*And ſuch the* Curſe *entail'd on Womankind.*

Here poor *Jane* thinks it *unhappy*, nay, a *Curſe*, that Women have not the Liberty of roving ———

*That Man the lawleſs Libertine may rove,*
*Free and unqueſtion'd through the wilds of Love,*
*While Woman, Senſe, and Natures eaſie Fool,*

the laſt Line I take to be abſolutely unintelligible.

*If poor weak Woman ſwerve from Virtue's Rule,*
*If ſtrongly Charm'd ſhe leave the* Thorny *Way,*

The poor penitent *Jane*, ſtill thinks the Paths of Virtue a thorny Way.

*And in the ſofter Paths of Pleaſure ſtray,*
*Ruin enſues, Reproach and endleſs Shame,*
*And one falſe ſtep entirely damns her Fame.*
*In vain with Tears the Loſs ſhe may deplore,*
*In vain look back to what ſhe was before,*
*She ſets like Stars that fall, to riſe no more.*

*Dap.*

*Dap.* That's wonderfully fine, *She ſets like Stars that fall to riſe no more.*

*True.* Very fine Nonſenſe! that is, She ſets, like that which does not ſet at all.

*Dap.* Mr. *Bays* had made it ſhe ſets like falling Stars that riſe no more; but he did me the Favour to take my Correction in that Line.

*True.* I never heard of Stars, that fell, except in the *Revelations.* But is it not ſtrange that Mr. *Bays* ſhou'd think a Whores Fame irretrievable, and yet imagine ſhe cou'd be a fit Heroine for a Tragedy.

*Dap.* Can there be any thing finer than *Dumont*'s deſcription of the lovely ſolitude he had found out for her.

*Free.* 'Tis very pretty; nay, ſo pretty, that I wonder *Jane* did not immediately take Poſt to it, and leave the Court with *Dumont*; for being ſo well provided for, ſhe had no Motive at all to Petition *Gloſter.* Beſides, ſhe had Reaſon to believe that *Haſtings* wou'd ſoon ſhow his Reſentment againſt *Dumont*; ſo that every thing in Nature bid her fly, and nothing cou'd perſuade her to ſtay but her being loath to leave her old Haunts; ſo that all the Miſchief came upon her, becauſe ſhe wou'd not be happy when ſhe might: But indeed poor *Jane* is a very whimſical, fooliſh, maudlin Character from the Beginning of the Play to the End.

*True.* Mr. *Bays* has ſinn'd againſt the *Likeneſs* in this Character, and given her a Virtue, which Hiſtory does not warrant. She is a Whore to three upon Record; and how many more Gallants ſhe might have had in private and of lower Degree we can't tell.

*Dap.* But as ſhe is repreſented by the Poet in his Play, ſhe had but one, and that a Monarch. — She reſiſts *Haſtings* a Man of great Quality and Power.

*Free.* She reſiſts one unprepar'd and unexpected attempt, at leaſt till *Dumont* ſends him away with a Flea in his Ear: But what wou'd have happen'd if her Husband in diſguiſe had not been near, we can t tell. *Haſtings* is a very ungenerous Lover, to preſs for the laſt Favour at firſt daſh; for ſpeaking one good Word for her to *Gloſter*. And indeed it is no great Argument of her Virtue that ſhe deny'd him; for a Woman muſt be a very abandon'd Whore indeed that wou'd let a Man get up and ride at the firſt offer.

*True.* It is really a very merry Tragedy, there are but ſix Men and two Women in it; the two Women are Whores, and three of the Men Villains, one a Cnckold, and another a Debocher of young Ladies, only *Belmour* is nothing at all.

*Free.*

*Free.* Mrs. *Alce* is a falſe diſſembling Baggage, to wheedle poor *Jenny* out of her Trinkets and not to give her a bit of Bread for them.

*True.* So that ſhe's a Cheat as well as a Whore, and ſo much the more unfit for a Tragic Character.

*Free.* The Scene between *Haſtings* and *Alice*, is a lame Copy of that between *Dorimant* and *Loveit* in Sir *Fopling*, and only fit for Comedy.

*True.* And the Scene between *Haſtings* and *Jenny* at Midnight, ſeems taken from that in the Chances, where *Don John* is for taking a Touch with *Conſtantia* in the Street, he's ſo hot and eager he can't ſtay till he gets to a Houſe; theſe give filthy Idea's, and are only fit to be acted in a Brothel, and not before Ladies of Honour and Virtue.

*Free. Alice* begins the Third Act with a Sililoquy of Eighteen Lines, to tell the Audience what ſhe is going to do with the Paper and its Contents, but this is a Trifle.

*True.* The change of the Paper is indeed a notable Contrivance, and worthy Mr. *Bays*'s great Genius.

*Free.* I thought, by what *Jenny* ſaid when ſhe came in, in this Act, that ſhe had been going to beg for *Dumont*, but ſhe is begging a piece of Bread.

*A poor, undone, forſaken helpleſs Woman*
*Intreats a little Bread for Charity,*
*To feed her Wants, and ſave her Life from*
*(periſhing.*

*True. To feed her Wants*; that is, to keep them ſtill Alive, whereas I ſuppoſe ſhe wou'd be underſtood to remove her Wants.

*Dap.* Why, look'e Gentlemen, I made the Objection to Mr. *Bays*, that I thought he ſhou'd have made *Jane* Petition for *Dumont*; but he told me, that wou'd have ſpoil'd the Plot, by letting *Gloſter* know, that *Haſtings* and ſhe were not on ſo good Terms as he imagin'd.

*True.* I find that Mr. *Bays* the Younger, has two Qualities like Mr. *Bays* the Elder, his Admiration of ſome odd Books, as *Reynard the Fox*, and the Old Ballads of *Jane Shore*, and the making Simile's in the midſt of a Paſſion, and after a Surprize.

*Let no nice Sir deſpiſe our hapleſs Dame,*
*Becauſe recording Ballads chant her Name;*
*Thoſe venerable Antient Song Inditers,*
*Soar'd many a pitch above our Modern Writers.*

I hope Mr. *Bays* ſpeaks for himſelf, and then he does thoſe Ancient Song Inditers but

but Juſtice, for poor *Jenny* has loſt by the Change of Hands very ſenſibly.

Thus for his Simile's: *Dumont* is ſurpriz'd that *Jenny* will go to her Retirement, and being heartily rejoyc'd at it, he makes a long *Simile* of Ten Lines, as much to the purpoſe as if he had ſaid nothing.

*Dap.* 'Gad you are the ſtrangeſt Critic I ever met with, I warrant you don't admire the Stile.

*Free.* I ſpeak for my part that I do not, 'tis a ſort of *Motley*, *Linſey Woolſey* Stile, *Gloſter* has, by his *Holydame*, and St. *Paul*, and many of *Shakeſpear*'s Words, but the reſt ſpeak generally in the Stile of the Moderns.

*Dap.* Why, I believe the Poet deſign'd that, for he has directed the Dreſs of *Gloſter* and *Jane* to be of thoſe Days; but thoſe of all the other Players to be Modern.

*True.* I think it ſo far from a Recommendation, that it is written in the Stile of *Shakeſpear*, that it ought to damn it; *Ennius* and *Lucretius* were very much admir'd by the *Romans*, but it never came into the Head of *Virgil*, *Horace*, *Ovid*, *Tibullus*, or or the reſt, to write in imitation of the Stile of either of theſe Poets; the beſt Stile, is that which arrives to the Perfection of the Language then in Being, ſuch as is that of *Cato*, which is the beſt Standard of Dramatic Diction which we have in our Tongue.

*Enter Sir* Indolent *and Mr.* Bays.

Sir *Ind. Entring, to Mr. Bays.*] No, no, two very Honeſt, Worthy, Ingenious Gentlemen as live you may depend on't, and much your humble Servants.

*Bays.* That Coxcomb *Dapper* told me they were *Critics*, and that they damn'd all my Plays.

Sir *Ind. Dapper* is an honeſt Fellow but he is miſtaken indeed Mr. *Bays. To. Freeman*, let me bring you acquainted with Mr. *Bays*, the Laurel hangs over his Brow, and there it will fix e'er it be long.

*Free.* Sir your moſt Humble Servant.

*Bays.* Sir, I am yours.

*True.* Mr. *Bays*, I am glad to ſee the Man whom Fame has talk'd ſo loud of.

*Bays.* Sir, my Service to you. Confuſion to Critics. [*Drinks.*

*I met her as returning*
*In ſolemn Pennance from the Public Croſs;*
*Before her certain Raſcal Officers,*
*Slaves in Authority, the Knaves of Juſtice*
*Proclaim'd the Tyrant* Gloſter's *Cruel Orders.*
*On ether ſide her march'd an ill-look'd Prieſt,*
A Bob for the Clergy and Court too, 'egad.
*Who with ſevere and horrid haggard Eyes,*
*Did ever and anon by turn upbraid her,*
*And thunder in her trembling Ear Damnation.*
*Around her numberleſs the Rabble flow'd,*

*Shouldring*

*Should ring each other, crowding for a View,*
*Gaping and Gazing, Taunting and Reviling;*
*Some Pitying, but those alas! how few!*
*The most, such Iron Hearts we are, and such*
*The base Barbarity of Humane Kind,*
*Hooting and Railing, and with Villainous Hands*
*Gathering the Filth from out the Common Ways,*
*To hurl upon her Head.*

I vow this moves me so that I can't go on — Gentlemen, have you never observ'd our BarbarousMob, how they use a poor Carted Bawd, or a Man in the Pillory, and the like?

*Free.* Oh! very inhumanely, Sir.

*Bays.* You must know, Sir, that there is about this Town, a poor unfortunate Creature call'd *Granny*, this poor Creature has been expos'd to the Blows and Buffets of outragious Fortune these many Years.

*True.* Very good Mr. *Bays* — What the Devil does he drive at *Jo?* [*Aside to* Free.

*Free.* May I succeed him in his Title if I can imagine. [*Aside to* True.

*Bays.* I have seen the Mob after her, heard her make a deplorable Moan, but the Mob threw Dirt at her; I thought it so pityful a sight, that I took the Hint of this Scene of *Jane Shore* from it; for thought I, if *Granny* with those plump Chops wou'd touch me, how much more must *Jane Shore* who had not eat a bit of Bread in three Days.

*True.*

*True.* But Mr. *Bays*, I never found any thing but Laughter mov'd by all *Granny*'s Sufferings.

*Bays.* True, Sir, among the very *Canaille*; but I have often obſerv'd the *finer Spirits* of the Mob touch'd with Concern; nay, I have ſeen ſome Venerable Matrons check the Million (to uſe one of *Shakeſpear*'s Words) for their Rudeneſs, Incivility, and all that; now, thought I, if *Granny*, who has had three or four Baſtards, can engage the Concern of theſe Venerable Matrons, how much more muſt *Jane Shore*, for we do not find it on Record, that ſhe ever had ſo much as one Baſtard.

*Free.* I proteſt Mr. *Bays*, I fancy that *Granny*, manag'd by ſo able a Pen as yours, wou'd make a celebrated Tragic Character; beſides, tho' ſhe has had ſome Baſtards, yet her Innocence is not chargeable with the Folly, ſhe not having any Notion that playing the Whore is any Crime, much leſs a Scandalous one.

*Bays.* Why truly, I have had thoughts of making *Granny* a Tragic Heroine;

*Quidlibet audendi ſemper fuit æqua Poteſtas.*

becauſe we never had an Ideot profeſs'd for a Heroine; ſo that it wou'd be entirely New, and therefore cannot fail of ſucceeding,

ing, for as no Body before me eſtabliſh'd Whores for Heroines, ſo I dare believe, that no Body beſides my ſelf ever thought of an Ideot for one. Beſides, I have made ſome Steps and Advances, or rather Deſcents towards this Character; my *Fair Penitent* was a Woman of Quality by Birth; Next I deſcended to *Jane Shore* a mere *Cit*, and only diſtinguiſh'd from the Mob by her Adultery with *Edward*. Next I intend to make *Betty Sands* my Heroine, and ſo by degrees to come down to *Granny*, who ſhou'd be my *non plus ultra* in that Way.

*True*. Well but, Mr. *Bays*, what has made you alter your Mind? or do you reſolve it ſtill?

*Bays*. No—The very Reaſon you recommend her for, is the Reaſon of my rejecting her, her *Innocence*; Whoring in her can ſcarce be call'd a Crime: But that is no Heroine for me, who does not play the whore knowingly, wittingly, and of choice. The Critics may talk of Art and Rules, and I know not what, but I am for Nature; I hate Art and Rule ———

*True*. But, Mr. *Bays*, what do you mean by Nature?

*Bays*. Why, I call that Nature, when a Poet writes what he naturally thinks.

*True*. That is, Mr. *Bays*, whatever comes into your Head.

*Bays*.

*Bays.* Right, Sir, you know my meaning. I ſhou'd have made fine work indeed with *Jane Shore* if I had written according to Art. The Critics wou'd not allow her to be a Character to move Pity, a Character fit for Tragedy, and I know not how many good Morrows: But I find to my Comfort, that it is a very good Tragical Character, my Pocket knows it, and my Reputation too; for it has made my Bookſellers reprint all my Plays; except the *Biter*, on the Revival of my Fame, which had for ſome time lain dormant. I'll ſhow you the force of Nature in me, which a Critic wou'd never have follow'd; for, Gentlemen, to raiſe Pity for poor *Jane Shore*, I bring in her Husband in the laſt Act, exclaiming againſt her Perfidy and her Ingratitude for his kind tender uſage of her, for whom he thought nothing too good or too dear.

*True.* How! Mr. *Bays*, methinks that ſhou'd raiſe the Indignation of the Audience, not their Pity; becauſe it aggravates her Guilt.

*Bays.* Oh! Sir, by no means; for I preſently make him relent and pity her, nay, reſolve to venture his Life to relieve her; and if he pity her ſo far, certainly others whom her Incontinence has not injur'd ought to pity her too. But to tell you the Truth, I had another Reaſon for this, and that

that was to bring in the Deſcription of her getting away from her Husband's Houſe in the King's Chariot.

*True.* Why, Mr. *Bays*, I thought Chariots had been a more Modern Invention.

*Bays.* Phoo, what ſignifies that, it made my Deſcription more beautiful than it cou'd have been without a Chariot. For you muſt know, Gentlemen, that I think of ſome fine Scenes from the Beginning of the Play to the End, and ſeveral fine Deſcriptions, and then at laſt I make ſome tacking Scenes, which finiſh my Play.

Sir *Ind.* Beſides, Mr. *Bays*, I believe you brought in that Deſcription to leſſen *Jane*'s Guilt, by making her go with the King with Reluctance.

*Bays.* No, hang it, that was too late, when I had given her ſo much pleaſure in deſcribing her paſt Loves, and Regret that playing the Whore ſhou'd be ſo infamous. I never trouble my Head much about a Plot, for to tell you the Truth, the more I think of that, the worſe I make it; and therefore I reſolve to write my next without any Plot at all.

*Free.* I think you have made pretty good Advances that way, Mr. *Bays*.

*Bays.* Tolerable I think.

*True.*

*True.* Did you ever read the *Rehearſal* Mr. *Bays?* Methinks all Dramatic Poets ſhou'd be Maſter of that Farce.

*Bays.* I have made my Advantage of it I aſſure you, Sir, for I have conſider'd what is there ridicul'd pleas'd at that time, and by Conſequence will pleaſe again.

*True.* So inſtead of being taught by *Smith* and *Johnſon*, you are inſtructed by *Bays.*

*Bays.* Right, Sir, and I have Copied my moſt taking things from this *Brentford* Tragedy: I write to pleaſe the Town, Sir, and if I do that, 'tis more than any of the Critics can do. You find that the Town at the ſame Time they went to the *Rehearſal*, went to ſee thoſe very Plays that were ridicul'd in it, and applauded their Rants and Rhime, and all that.

*Free.* But, Mr. *Bays*, 'tis as certain, that upon this Dramatic Criticiſm the Poets alter'd their Method, and left off their Rants and their Rhimes, and endeavour'd to come more into Nature.

*Bays.* Every one to his Taſte, you may talk of *Art* as long as you will, but I am ſure I have a better Art of getting Applauſe than can be learn'd from all the Rules of *Ariſtotle*, *Horace*, or any other of the Demagogues of *Parnaſſus.*

*True.* Is it a Secret, Mr. *Bays?* If it may be communicated, you may do a young Man

Man a Kindneſs who may perhaps venture to Write.

*Bays.* To ſhow you, Sir, that I am Communicative, I will tell you how I do ſecure Succeſs; On one ſide, I pick out ſome of the ſmootheſt and moſt ſonorous Lines in my Play, ſome of the beſt *Simile's* and Deſcriptions, and theſe I repeat about to all I meet, thus applying to their Judgment, I impoſe a liking on them, and theſe ſhining Parts give a great Idea of the Whole; ſo that coming with this Prepoſſeſſion, they muſt be pleas'd, and they engage the Reſt; this is but one of my Rules of *Expectation.*

*True.* So you call theſe the Rules of *Expectation.*

*Bays.* True, Sir; Again —— you muſt know the Players have me in great Admiration, and I muſt needs ſay do me Juſtice; ſo they not only dreſs my Play well, which is a conſiderable Advantage, but cry it up about two Months before it comes on; and this has great influence on many of the Audience. But in *Jane Shore* I had ſome accidental Helps to *Expectation*, my *Bookſeller*, and ſome others of that Trade, in hopes to get by my Name, publiſh five or ſix ſorts of *Lives of Jane Shore:* This brought all who had bought the Lives, and ſecur'd all who uſe to come to Plays; ſo if every one of thoſe come but once, it muſt give my

Play a conſiderable Run. And then 'tis not one Farthing matter whether it pleas'd or not; I did my buſineſs by it, and that's enough I think.

Sir *Ind.* You have forgot one thing Mr. *Bays*, the Favour of Men of Quality; for a Man may Write till Doomſday if they don't favour him, he'll ſcarce make much of the matter.

*Bays.* Ah! Sir *Indolent*, I am the happieſt Man alive in that, for I have not only the Favour of the Men of Quality, but of the Ladies too——'egad I believe I can't diſoblige them; I told them formerly that they were all like my *Fair Penitent*, and *Jane Shore* tells them they are all now like her, and therefore ought to pity her Caſe; yet you ſee how they flock to my Play.

*Free.* You are a happy Man Mr. *Bays*; Here's to your Health Sir.

*Bays.* By no means Sir, pray to the Ladies who advance *Jane Shore*.

*Free.* What *Dapper* aſleep! Come you muſt go with me, I am to meet ſome Players to Night about finiſhing a Play left imperfect by a Man of great Genius. Let me ſee——'tis much about the Hour——Gentlemen, your moſt faithful humble Servant; Sir *Indolent* yours. [*Exit* Bays *and* [Dapper.

Sir

Sir *Ind.* Nay I muſt be going this Minute *Jo*, and *Dick* your faithful Servant.

[ *Exit Sir* Indolent.

*Free.* Faith *Bays* is ſomething in the right on't, Fame is diſpens'd by the Ignorant; And to what purpoſe then ſhou'd a Man of Judgment ſpend his time to expoſe himſelf to the World, when if he meets with Succeſs, he is but on the Level with ſuch a Writer as this, whoſe Plays have no one quality of the *Drama*, but are a ſtrange Medley of Groteſque Figures that cannot be brought to any Form or Regularity.

*True.* The Truth on't is, to write Plays now, when the Fate depends on the Players and the Common Audience, can only be excus'd by Neceſſity. If ever the *Engliſh* Court can produce a *Richelieu*, this noble Province of Poetry may thrive and be reform'd.

*Free.* We are more likely to find his Cunning than his Wiſdom in our Stateſmen; who have never yet thought the Politer Letters worthy their Favour.

*True.* If any ſuch bright Genius ſhou'd ariſe, we ſhou'd have no more *Dappers* nor *Bays*'s to expoſe the Folly of the Nation to Forraigners who have a juſter Taſte. Here Drawer call a Coach.

*Draw.* There is one at the Door Sir.

*True.*

*True.* Come I'll ſet you down, I go by your Door. What my Lord *Rocheſter* ſaid of Report or common Fame, will hold of the Poetic Fame:

*There's not a thing on Earth that you can Name,*
*So fickle and ſo falſe as vulgar Fame.*

Come you're next the Door, no Ceremony.

[*Exeunt Omnes.*

*Draw.* You're welcome Gentlemen.

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*FINIS.*